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LONDON SOCIETY.

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OF

LIGHT AND AMUSING LITERATURE

FOR

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LONDON SOCIETY.

JANUARY 1879.

LADY CHARMEIGH'S DIAMONDS.

I.

SIR PETER CHARMEIGH had warned his wife more than once that she would be robbed of her diamonds if she was not more careful to lock them up. The newspapers were chronicling great jewel robberies at this time; and Sir Peter one day emphasised his warnings by bringing home from London a fine ebony strong-box, with the most adorable of gold keys attached as a pendant to a bracelet.

This pretty gift quite delighted Lady Charmeigh, who convoked all her acquaintances to the Hall to see her wonderful anti-burglar safe. A description of it somehow got into the county papers. It was of globular shape, about the size of a big schoolroom globe, and mounted in the same fashion on a stand with a pivot. An ingenious mechanism, which had to be wound up every morning, kept it spinning round all day at the rate of thirty revolutions a minute, and any attempt to check it in its course resulted in the ringing of a loud alarm. The way to stop it was to press with the foot a nob on one of the legs of the stand, and when it had ceased revolving, to form a word with some movable letters set in a circular plate at the top of the globe. After this it was all plain sailing. You had only to insert

the gold key in a cavity of the middle letter, which formed a keyhole, to give one turn to the right, and two to the left, and then the box opened of itself into two halves, each forming a receptacle full of compartments lined with blue velvet. There was a place for rings, another for bracelets, a third for tiaras, one for money, and so forth; and all were perfectly adapted to their special uses. In fact, it was a beautiful box, and Lady Charmeigh spent a most amusing week in experimenting on it before her friends, who knew not whether to admire it most when it spun round and round, making its steel incrustations flash in the light, or when it stood open revealing a wealth of trinkets almost unmatched, for the 'Charmeigh diamonds' were famous from London to Amsterdam.

Unfortunately Lady Charmeigh was one of those persons who soon tire of a new toy. A pretty little woman with large earnest blue eyes and a smiling mouth, she had in many things the ways of a petted child, and could not bear trouble nor contradiction. So long as her safe gave her amusement, she scrupulously locked up her jewels in it; but when the novelty had worn off and it became a question of touching a nob, forming a word, and turning a key

once to the right and twice to the left every time she wanted to get out a ring or a locket, she began to find the process troublesome. Sir Peter made things worse by solemnly winding up the mechanism himself every morning and lecturing upon its perfections. He was as proud of the safe as if he was the inventor, and took an altogether professional pleasure in polishing its steel-work with a piece of wash-leather, and explaining how the key should be turned, with a little push forward to start some hidden spring about which he was very learned. Sir Peter was a rather fidgety middle-aged gentleman, with a fat face, and there were times when, hearing him prose about the beauties of machinery, Lady Charmeigh felt inclined to sit down and scream. Besides, there was another cause of irritation. The talismanic word necessary to open this precious strong-box altered every day of the week, so that Lady Charmeigh, who had a defective memory, was constantly making mistakes. She spelt 'Jupiter' when it ought to have been 'Mercury,' and finding the box would not cease its spinning, tried to stop it with her small hands; whereupon it would set up a yelling with its alarum like that of a peevish beast molested. Any one who knows what a pretty woman's nerves are, will quite understand how, at the end of a fortnight, Lady Charmeigh came to hate her strong-box with an intense and unquenchable loathing. The very sound it made in revolving, a well-oiled purring sound, was odious to her; and if it had not been for her maid, who took as great a delight in the instrument as Sir Peter did, Lady Charmeigh would have left off locking up her jewelry in it, and practised some little deceit towards her husband; but every

time she forgot to lock up a trinket, Martha (or Patty) Raggles, her maid, would exclaim,

'O, my lady, think of what Sir Peter would say if he knew you left those jools a-lyin' about, and he so afeard of burglars. O my goodness!'

Patty was herself very much afraid of thieves. She was a simple good-natured country wench, who had lived a little while with Lady Charmeigh before the latter's marriage; and who, having spent five years in her service since, had become expert at hair-dressing, lace-ironing, and dress-making—more so than at speaking elegant English. Her colloquialisms were vulgar, but her heart was sound, and her mistress was very fond of her; for, indeed, Lady Charmeigh liked all people who were good-natured and did not tease her, and bore her occasional outbreaks of bad temper with philosophy. However, there were some tiffs between her ladyship and the maid respecting that strong-box. Lady Charmeigh thought Patty too officious about it, and reminded her rather tartly that when the box had first come into the house she—Patty—had been horribly afraid of it as of a live thing. This was perfectly true; but we grow accustomed to things we had at first disliked; and Patty had made friends with the 'live' box, as she might with a snappish dog who had proved tractable on closer acquaintance. There was even something pathetic in her artless admiration of its strength and beauties; and as the girl was right to advise her mistress to be cautious about jewels of so great price, Lady Charmeigh gave up quarrelling about the matter. Only it so chanced that Patty went home for a month's holiday to keep house for a married sister

who was ill; and then Lady Charmeigh took an easy opportunity of removing all her trinkets from the safe, unknown to her husband, and restoring them to her drawers. Sir Peter continued to wind up the safe gravely every morning; but there was nothing in it.

Now it was about a week after this little daily farce had begun to be enacted—a week, that is, after Patty's departure—when Charmeigh Hall became the scene of a memorable burglary which furnished a month's table-talk to every mansion in England.

One November evening, while Sir Peter was entertaining some of his brother magistrates and their wives at dinner, Lady Charmeigh's dressing-room was entered by means of a ladder placed under a window that looked into the garden, and the safe, the famous safe, was broken open like a walnut. The burglars must have commenced operations very soon after the company sat down to dinner, and they must have been amazingly quick about their work; for it was no later than eight when a housemaid entering the room surprised them, and gave instant alarm by screaming and falling down in hysterics. The burglars decamped with alacrity; and the company, attracted by the noise, hurried upstairs, preceded by Sir Peter, with his mouth full and a napkin in one hand. It was a singular sight. Ladies shivering in their dinner-dresses, and huddling close to gentlemen in evening clothes; Lady Charmeigh herself, pale with terror, and crossing her hands over the low body of her cerise dress, as if afraid that some robbers would snatch at the lovely pearl necklace which she wore round her throat; and then fat Sir Peter, who looked as if he

wished he had brought a poker with him instead of the napkin, which was not much of a weapon to fight with in case of assault.

There was a moment's anxious silence when the door of the dressing-room was reached; and then a very shout of anguish escaped from Sir Peter, who tottered with sudden faintness: 'Great heavens, the safe has been ransacked, and all the jewels have been stolen!'

'The Charmeigh diamonds stolen!' This dismayed cry was echoed by the entire company, including footmen, butler, cook, and housemaids grouped at the top of the staircase in attitudes expressive of consternation. The butler felt so bad that he sat down on the stairs to compose himself, and the tallest of the pair of housemaids tried to soothe him.

'O dear, dear!' cried Lady Charmeigh; and she too being overcome, staggered into the room, and sank on an ottoman.

'Poor thing!' exclaimed a certain Lady Vilious, who was her best friend, and had always envied her the possession of these diamonds. 'Poor dear! perhaps the thieves will be caught with their plunder. Let us hope so!'

'Never!' yelled Sir Peter, mopping the dew of emotion off his face with the napkin. 'Those fellows are never caught; they get clean away, and have the diamonds recut in Holland. Think of that! Diamonds which have been in my family for two centuries, and worth a hundred thousand pounds at least!' Something like a sob accompanied these words.

'It is indeed a loss!' ejaculated Lady Vilious, with a great show of sympathy; but there was a gleam in her eyes. She was a mincing sort of lady, with thin lips and a cold glance. By this time everybody had crowded into

the dressing-room. The chill night air blowing through the open window struck upon the bare shoulders of the ladies; the wax-candles flickered; some of the gentlemen craned out of the window, peering through the darkness for sight or sound of the retreating thieves. One of them hallooed because he espied a cat.

Most of those present, however, concentrated their attention upon the impenetrable safe which had yielded so ignominiously to a first attack. It had evidently been burst, and not left open accidentally by Lady Charmeigh, as Sir Peter at first suspected; for it bore marks of violence. The thieves must have got possession of the secret for stopping its rotation, since the alarum had not been sounded; but they had failed to form the word which made the lock act, and so they had simply prised the two halves of the safe apart with their crowbars. There stood the globe open, and void of everything except a small portrait of Sir Peter on enamel, which the thieves had had the bad taste not to regard as a valuable. For the rest, they seemed to have laid hand on every trinket, large or small; and thus the disaster was revealed as being so big that Sir Peter's visitors felt as if common expressions of sympathy would be mockery. Even the plumper and older squires, who were disgusted at having been roused from dinner between the fish and *entrées*, recognised that there are conjunctures in which a host may be pardoned for forgetting that there are still two courses to discuss. They surrounded Lady Charmeigh, whom they naturally imagined to be plunged in an abyss of grief—one of the worst griefs that a pretty woman can know; for diamonds are not only precious in themselves, but they are dewdrops on

feminine beauty, and help to make it shine.

Judge, then, of the surprise of the assemblage when her ladyship, who appeared to be sobbing with her face buried in her handkerchief, suddenly looked up, her features being aglow with merriment, and burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter. The guests glanced at one another, thinking she must have lost her reason; but when peal after peal had rung out from her pretty mouth, without evoking one responsive smile, she checked herself, and rose, blushing but still amused.

'Excuse me, I know it's very wrong,' she said; 'but the fact is my jewels have not been stolen at all. See here;' and, unlocking the glass door of her wardrobe, she pointed to a multitude of velvet and shagreen cases lying all unharmed upon the shelves.

'What, you had not put them in the safe, then?' exclaimed Sir Peter, divided between intense relief and annoyance that his orders had not been obeyed.

'No; I thought it would be *unsafe* to do so,' said Lady Charmeigh, with a fresh laugh. 'Everybody has been talking so much of my strong-box that I felt convinced its secrets must have become matters of notoriety; so I reasoned that if burglars broke into the house they would spend all their efforts on the safe, without exploring elsewhere. And it seems I was right.'

'Bravo!' ejaculated Lady Charmeigh's cousin, Dick Lyster, a Hussar. 'By Jove, that's what I call good tactics, cousin.' And so said all the other gentlemen, with applauding murmurs.

'And do you mean to say there was nothing whatever in the box?' asked Sir Peter, who could scarcely believe he had a wife of so much wit.

'Nothing of consequence: I had removed all my treasures,' answered my lady.

'You forget your husband's portrait, my dear,' remarked Lady Vilious, who had been smiling yellow, as the French say.

'O, I left that in the box, so as to be able to say truthfully that it did contain something precious,' replied Lady Charmeigh, with ready tact; but she mentally scored down her good friend for reprisals on the earliest opportunity.

'Well, all I can say is that you deserve to be made keeper of the Crown jewels, cousin Amy,' cried Captain Dick, with genuine admiration. 'You have found out the true uses of safes.'

'Yes, to put nothing in them,' smiled Lady Charmeigh. 'And now let us go back to dinner; I am really ashamed that our appetites should have been spoiled for nothing.'

They did return to dinner, some with appetites rather renovated than impaired; and the talk at table was all about the ingenuity and sense which the winsome hostess had displayed, not only in taking her measures against burglars, but in keeping her counsel about them. In the course of the evening servants were despatched to give information to the police, and detectives were sent afield, who of course discovered nothing, after the manner of their kind, though they went to work with sapient looks and handfuls of 'clues.' During a whole fortnight, however, the papers discussed the great burglary at Charmeigh Hall, and Lady Charmeigh was complimented on her 'happy thought.' She became quite a heroine, renowned among fair women as a type of the prudent *châtelaine*.

II.

ALL this was very fine; but Sir Peter Charmeigh did not feel much like a hero. He and the maker of the safe laid their heads together, and agreed that this triumph of mechanical craft ought never to have been burst open, and could not have been if the most ordinary rules of dynamics had been followed in forcing it. They were like the historians, enumerating the hundred and one reasons why Waterloo ought not to have been won by the English. The safe-maker wrote a letter to the *Times* on this subject, and Sir Peter gloomily recommended it to the perusal of his wife, who, however, preferred to read the leading articles, in which her praises were set forth. Since the burglary she had adopted rather a houghty-toity attitude, as of one who has asserted her wisdom beyond dispute. Sir Peter was humiliated, and there came a day when he seriously began to think that his wife's pride required taking down a little.

One is sorry to say that these views, too candidly expressed, led to some disagreeable scenes. Sir Peter was a pompous man, who liked to play Sir Oracle in his own house, and his occupation would have been gone if he had been obliged to give up fault-finding and counselling. The first time that he heard Lady Charmeigh yawn over some wise saw of his, it was as though the knell of marital authority had sounded in his ears, and he expressed himself bitterly on this point to Dick Lyster, who was staying at the Hall. He could not have chosen a better confidant or a worse one: a better, for Dick liked him and gave him ready sympathy; a worse one, for this same Dick was an incorrigible practical joker, who forthwith

began turning over a plan for getting a good laugh out of the domestic situation.

'Look here,' said he to the Baronet, as they sat together over their walnuts and wine. 'You must teach Amy a lesson, or else she'll be losing her jewels from over-confidence.'

'That's what I'm always telling her, but she won't listen,' answered miserable Sir Peter. 'Those wretched newspapers have turned her head. She has no consideration for my feelings nor for my experience.'

'You must recover your prestige with a grand stroke,' remarked the Hussar. 'Suppose you prove to Amy that you are right by stealing all her jewels yourself.'

'I steal my wife's jewels?'

'Yes; you can make a capital joke of it. You leave the Hall, saying you are going up to London on business for two days; you return quietly in the evening, enter the house without being seen, and carry off the jewels in the night to your own dressing-room. In the morning, after Amy has had a good scare, you come forward and explain the pleasantry. I'll be bound you are master in your own house after that!'

'You have queer ideas, Dick,' said Sir Peter, amazed, but evidently tempted. 'If I were ten years younger I don't say—'

'What have ten years to do with it? You are quite young enough to enter into a piece of fun. However, just leave the business details to me; I will be your confederate and help to mount this little comedy.'

Sir Peter had not sagacity enough to see that a husband who plots how he may inflict a deep wound on his wife's vanity is playing a dangerous game. He

looked only to the recovery of his supremacy, though, to do him justice, he really did feel very anxious about the Charmeigh diamonds, which were his family pride. When a family has nothing else to be proud of, it takes to being proud about its belongings; and since the burglary, Sir Peter had often reflected with indignation that it was a melancholy thing to see a hundred thousand pounds' worth of property in the hands of a giddy little woman, who had no proper respect for her treasure. Why, that very evening Sir Peter had seen a priceless necklace lying on the dressing-room table with no one present to guard it. On the whole, though, it is doubtful whether the Baronet would have entered into Dick Lyster's scheme had not the Hussar plied him with a glass or two of port in excess of his usual ration. This set him babbling about the obstinacy and foolishness of women—subjects upon which country gentlemen are always very eloquent when they have well drunk. By the end of an hour he was almost game for anything, and kept chuckling to himself in anticipation of the triumph he should enjoy when he heard his Amy 'screaming and wringing her hands all over the place.' He was imparting his vision of this bliss to Dick, when the butler entered to say that my lady's maid had a message to deliver; and next moment Patty Raggles came in to announce that Lady Charmeigh felt indisposed and had gone up to her room, so that she begged the gentlemen to excuse her for not meeting them at tea in the drawing-room. As Dick and Sir Peter were the only gentlemen in question, this incident was of not much consequence; but it surprised Sir Peter to see Patty, whom he believed to be still away on her holiday.

'Why, Patty, I did not know you had returned,' said he.

'Yes, Sir Peter. I came back this evening,' rejoined the damsel, with a curtsy.

'Home air seems to have done you good; your cheeks are like roses. Well, I suppose you heard of the great burglary that took place here whilst you were gone?'

'Yes, Sir Peter; it gave me quite a turn. O, those burglars! only to think of their wicked impudence! And then that safe too, who'd ever have thought it would have let itself be burst open? But you see, Sir Peter, you and I was in the wrong, and my lady was right after all.'

Sir Peter pulled a face, and Dick Lyster smiled.

'I never much liked that girl,' remarked the Baronet when Patty left the room; but Dick, making the most of his opportunity, observed that it was time for Sir Peter to be up and stirring, since his servants were criticising his judgment. Then abruptly:

'But why not act this very night? The occasion is most propitious. Amy has gone to bed early, the maid will be busy chattering about her holiday adventures in the servants' hall. I am sure that jewelry will be lying about in heaps on all the tables.'

'But how am I to act to-night?' asked Sir Peter, feeling a little of his valour ooze out of him.

'Why, we'll sit up until all the household are in bed, and then go into the garden and see if it isn't possible for you to effect an entrance through some window or unlocked door that will give you an opportunity of testing the vigilance of your servants.'

'Isn't it rather a queer thing to do? I think I should look very foolish if caught climbing through a window with a ladder. Why,

one of the servants might send a charge of shot into my back.'

'No fear; we'll manage so as not to be seen.'

'But, I say, don't you feel it's rather a cold night? Shouldn't we do well to put the thing off till we have matured our plans?'

Sir Peter was evidently trying to back out; but Dick Lyster would not allow him to do this. 'No,' said he, giving him a slap on the thigh; 'I want to see you wearing the domestic crown again. I'll make a potentate of you in your own despite. No funking now.'

A couple of hours later, when midnight had struck, and all Charmeigh Hall was hushed in repose, two figures might have been seen groping their way like malefactors in the obscurity of the garden. It was a very dark night indeed, and Sir Peter's teeth chattered partly from cold and partly from nervousness, though he had sought to steady himself with pretty deep potations. Dick Lyster was grinning like a Cheshire cat. As he made for the shed where the gardeners kept their ladders, he could not help laughing at the remarkable aspect of Sir Peter, who, to equip himself for his burglary, had put on a thick overcoat, furred gloves, and a flannel cricket-cap, which he had tied down on his head with a silk pocket-handkerchief, intended to protect his ears. He could no more have run, if chevied, than a wine-tun can gallop. However, there were impulses or resolution in his demeanour, and he kept on repeating that he was doing all this solely to assert his dignity. 'A man must be a man,' said he dolefully, as his teeth chattered.

A ladder was soon found, and the two men carrying it across the garden with stealthy steps planted

it under the window of Lady Charmeigh's dressing-room. Dick, who was a nimble gymnast, then made haste to climb the ladder, and on reaching the top tried the window, which by an almost miraculous coincidence proved to be open. This Dick announced, when he had slid down like a monkey, and the news exasperated Sir Peter, who saw in it another proof of his wife's incurable giddiness, for he never suspected that Dick himself had unfastened the bolt that afternoon. 'Why, Amy must be mad to act in this way less than a month after the burglary; and a window open in November too!'

'Such a woman deserves to lose her jewels,' concurred the Hussar feelingly.

'She never deserved to have any; and I say when I've got them, I've a good mind to lodge them in the bank; that will tease her.'

'Right you are; your thoughts are those of a sage. But look sharp now.'

'That ladder seems a very tall one,' observed Sir Peter, with his foot on the lowest rung. 'But mind you, I am only doing this strange thing out of regard for my dignity.'

'Of course; and I'll mount guard below from the same feeling,' laughed Dick. 'Up you go.'

The ascent of Sir Peter up the ladder did not prove such an easy and graceful affair as Dick's had been. It rather resembled the progress of a stout bear up a pole. Twice the corpulent Baronet paused and listened to the sad sighing of the wind through the chestnut-trees of his park, for it seemed as though he heard voices mocking him. Once he uttered an exclamation on feeling the ladder creak; and when he got to the top and placed his hand on the cold stone of the window-sill

a shiver ran through his limbs. Here a little piece of high gymnastics became necessary, for the problem to be solved was how to get into the room without any noise. To an agile man this would have been easy; but to a fat one it was a thing of trouble, causing wheezes and puffings, besides profuse perspiration. Intent on his dignified purpose, though, Sir Peter made his best exertions, and contrived somehow to land himself into the dressing-room on his back with a soft thump like that of a bag of linen for the wash. Luckily the carpet was thick, and the noise woke no echoes. Crawling to his legs in the dim light—for there were embers of a fire still aglow in the grate—Sir Peter leaned out of the window, and signalled to Dick that it was 'all right' by waving his handkerchief. Then he thrust a match against a red coal, and proceeded to light one of the candles on the chimney-piece. This was a delicate moment. If Lady Charmeigh saw the light through her bedroom door, which stood ajar, the whole enterprise would break down. But her ladyship was sound asleep. Sir Peter satisfied himself about that by entering her room on tip-toe, and listening to her breathing soft and regular as an infant's.

'Foolish woman,' he repeated, as he stood by the bed. 'Here now, if I were a real burglar, I could kill her outright.'

The thought made him shudder, but it also impelled him with the desire to do his work quickly and to do it well. He caught sight of himself in a glass, and felt that he looked like a real burglar, in so much that he was startled by the expression of rapine imprinted on his sleek face. It is a fact that the countenances of men reflect their occupations pretty vividly. Sir Peter exhibited

quite a burglarious dexterity of touch in running his hands over the toilet-table in the bedroom to find out whether there were any valuables there. He durst not bring a light into the room, and it was some moments before he could accustom his eyes to the

semi-obscurity. When he did so he perceived that there were no trinkets at all lying about. The only thing on the table was a gold *porte-bonheur*, with the key of the famous safe attached to it by a chain. Sir Peter looked into the wardrobe, whose door was open—

same result. Not an article of any sort that thieves would care to take was visible. 'Why,' so liloquised the disgusted Baronet, 'I shouldn't wonder if, now that the secret of the safe is exploded, Amy had taken to lodging her jewels there just to spite me.'

He returned noiselessly to the dressing-room, and there sure

enough saw the globular strong-box standing in its appointed corner, and revolving with that quiet purring sound which Lady Charmeigh had lately abhorred.

Now the sight profoundly astonished Sir Peter, for he was not aware that the safe had been mended. It moreover incensed him, for that Lady Charmeigh

should have entered into communication with the safe-maker without telling him anything about it was evidently a slight upon that marital dignity concerning which he was so sensitive. As Sir Peter seldom went into his wife's dressing-room, he had not seen the strong-box for more than a fortnight, and he now began to walk round and round it, examining it with the stealthy attention of a caged animal inspecting some strange thing. It had been perfectly mended, and looked from its massiveness as if it could defy the attacks of any gang of cracksmen.

'Well, of all the perverse, incomprehensible, wayward creatures, women are the worst!' exclaimed Sir Peter. 'Only to think of the jewels being in that safe now. Amy has forgotten to lock up her key, though, which is just like her. I'll open the box, and as sure as I'm alive every diamond shall be put into the bank to-morrow. We shall see what you think of your precious cleverness then, my lady!'

Sir Peter chuckled in malicious glee, and stole back to the bedroom. As he returned with the bracelet and key, he looked out of the window and saw Dick Lyster smoking a cigar patiently at the foot of the ladder. It had been arranged that Dick should remain at this post until the burglary had been consummated, and then go off to bed, leaving the ladder standing under the open window to frighten the servants in the morning. Sir Peter, on his side, was to return to his own quarters without, of course, passing through the window again. So confident did the Baronet now feel of success that, to spare Dick the trouble of remaining out longer in the cold, he dropped his pocket-handkerchief into the garden, which was the

preconcerted signal that everything had gone off well and that Dick might depart. Having done this, Sir Peter, who felt hot from perspiration and excitement, doffed his overcoat, coat, and gloves, and betook himself to business, key in hand.

'Let me see, to-day is Thursday,' said he, 'so "Jupiter" will be the word.' He touched the nob on the stand with his foot, and the globe became motionless. A few turns of the disk at the top of the globe brought up the letters of the word 'Jupiter,' and then Sir Peter inserted his key into a cavity between the body and the dot of the middle letter *i*. But at this moment an appalling thing occurred. A Roman candle starting up under the marauder's nose exploded with a deafening bang, the alarum began to ring like mad, and at the same time Sir Peter felt his hand tight imprisoned in a steel loop which clutched him with bruising force.

'Help!' bawled the miserable man, for the clasp hurt him, besides which his hair and eyebrows had been singed by the powder of the Roman candle, and he was frightened out of his wits. 'Help! murder! thieves! Hie, Amy!'

Lady Charmeigh, unable to distinguish the sound of her husband's voice, had jumped out of bed in a panic and run into the passage, where she was uttering piercing shrieks. These, joined to the maddened vociferations of Sir Peter, who was the more scared from being in the dark, as he had upset the candle and could not understand what was happening to him, speedily roused the whole household. There was a stampede of feet down corridors, an opening and shutting of doors, and then presently Sir Peter heard the sharp firm voice of Patty Raggles saying,

'O, it's a burglar caught in your ladyship's new trap. We needn't be afraid of him. Just let me teach him a lesson with this riding-whip. Come along, John, Thomas, Charles, all of you.'

The door of the dressing-room was thrown back and a curious procession filed in—the butler and footmen in shirtsleeves and trousers, the maids in their smocks and flannel petticoats; behind all, Lady Charmeigh wrapped in a *peignoir*, and trembling. But Patty Raggles, with a quite manly courage, strode in front brandishing one of her mistress's riding-whips. Sir Peter had become silent and sheepish, expecting to be released, and he turned a bewildered countenance towards his servants, forgetting that it was impossible for them to recognise him with his blackened face, to say nothing of the cricket-cap and handkerchief which converted him into a villanous guy. Besides, the noise of the alarm, which continued to ring twice as loud as any telegraph-bell, drowned the sound of his voice, when he piteously ejaculated,

'It's I!'

'You, is it?' answered Patty Raggles roughly; and, to the horror and fury of Sir Peter, the strong-armed wench began belabouring the chubbiest parts of his lower man with terrific slashing cuts. 'There, take that,' she said, 'and that, and that! Now a few on the hands to warm you this cold weather. Ah, you don't like it, I see! well, try another dose on the legs—whish, whish!'

It was in vain that poor fat Sir Peter leaped, danced, yelled, cursed; the louder he roared, the more was the natural sound of his voice altered; and, meanwhile, his gambols were so ludicrous, he was evidently suffering such exquisite pain from his whipping, that

the spectators could not forbear to laugh. Lady Charmeigh, whose risible faculties were easily stirred, was the first to set the example, and though she said, 'Enough, Patty, enough,' she could not check her tittering. The servants, emboldened by her conduct, fairly guffawed to see a rogue, as they imagined, get his full deserts, and so the comedy might have continued some time longer, had not Dick Lyster suddenly appeared on the scene in a dressing-gown, and exclaimed,

'I say, what's all this uproar? Why, it's Sir Peter you are thrashing!'

'Sir Peter!' cried Patty, falling back, and she let the whip drop.

'Sir Peter!' chorussed the other servants, in awe-stricken accents.

'Sir Peter!' exclaimed Lady Charmeigh, stupefied, and she advanced as if doubting whether this were not a hoax. 'Why, how come you to be here?' she cried, as soon as she could recognise her lord.

'Loose me from this, will you?' roared the Baronet, ferocious from pain and rage.

'Why, how are you caught?' said Lady Charmeigh. 'Let me see, I don't know if I remember how this catch can be unfastened. Do you, Patty?'

'Yes, my lady; I'll loose Sir Peter,' said Patty, bustling forward. 'And, O sir, I'm so sorry for the whipping I gave yer. I do hope your poor body isn't sore?'

'Out of my sight, you drab!' thundered the Baronet, as soon as he was released. 'Never let me see you again; and all you others clear off this instant. What are you all gaping at?'

Sir Peter was quite wild, and the room was cleared without more ado; but as soon as the

husband and wife were alone together, Lady Charmeigh became grave, and said severely,

'Now will you please explain to me how you came to cause such a scandalous scene?'

'O, bother!' groaned Sir Peter. 'Fetch me some arnica; I feel as if my wrist were coming off. And, O, mercy, look at my hands and legs!'

III.

FROM that hour Sir Peter Charmeigh was a subjugated man. Not that her ladyship made an ungenerous use of her triumph; for she was, indeed, very good-natured in trying to salve the wounds inflicted on her husband's self-esteem, not less than in embrocating those which his limbs had endured. Knowing how painful it must be to him to see in the house servants who had been witnesses of his discomfiture, she dismissed most of them, and would even have found a new situation for Patty Raggles had Sir Peter insisted on it; but he did not, for the wench became meek and hysterical, vowing she was ready to die of grief for having whipped so good a master, and promising to throw herself into a pond if she were discharged. Sir Peter told her to stay and be hanged; and he appeared to be insensible to his wife's blandishments, though she really did all that a loving wife can do to atone for her share in his misadventure. But the story had of course leaked out, and Sir Peter was chaffed by his country friends in a style most galling to the pride of a consequential man. Wherever he went—whether to cover-side, magistrates' meetings, agricultural shows—he was jocosely asked whether Lady Charmeigh's diamonds were safe, and some ill-natured wag had the baseness to send her lady-

ship anonymously a new riding-whip with a facetious inscription on its gold nob. To make matters worse, Sir Peter began to have misgivings that the whole affair of the sham burglary had been planned between Dick Lyster and Patty Raggles on purpose to get him punished and to make him ridiculous. Lady Vilious, Amy's good friend, set this rumour about, and caused much annoyance to Lady Charmeigh by so doing. Her ladyship roundly taxed the Hussar with the imputed freak; but he denied with so much earnestness, word-of-honouring, and so forth, that there was no option but to believe him. However, Lady Charmeigh deemed it good policy to remove her safe out of Sir Peter's sight. It was stowed away in a lumber-room, and the Baronet never made any allusions to it. It was noticed also that his interest in machinery perceptibly declined from this time.

Everything passes, even rancour among married couples; and so it befell that, after a few months, the recollection of his trouble grew less intensely bitter in Sir Peter's mind, and matters ran again in their old grooves at Charmeigh Hall. No more burglars were heard of, and Lady Charmeigh, trusting in her good star, fell to thinking that since her diamonds had braved such desperate raids, they must bear charmed lives. But in this she was wrong, and it was her destiny to go through a much more trying experience than the first two which had fallen to her lot.

Spring came, and with it the London season, when the Charmeighs were wont to remove to their town house in Park-lane. The day fixed for their departure was a fine sunny Monday in April; but the sudden illness of one of Sir Peter's uncles obliged

the Baronet to go and spend a few days with the relative, and so Lady Charmeigh went to London alone. Her servants accompanied her, and with them Patty Raggles. Now Patty had been in unaccountably low spirits for some weeks past, and her mistress was very anxious about her. There were times when the girl was almost flighty with a causeless gaiety, and others when she appeared smitten with hypochondria, so sullen was she and peevish. Lady Charmeigh was too good-hearted a little woman not to endeavour with all her might to ascertain the motives for her favourite servant's depression of spirits; and she had ended by eliciting, after some trouble, that Patty was in love with one of the footmen who had been discharged after the affair with Sir Peter. This man, said Patty, had thoughts of emigrating to America, and she wanted to go with him, though the idea of expatriation made her wretched. There were perhaps other causes for her sadness which she did not mention; anyhow, on the evening of her arrival in London, while Lady Charmeigh was sitting in her boudoir after dinner, Patty startled her mistress by saying that she meant to leave her situation in three days. Her manner was agitated, and she seemed ready to cry; but she did not actually shed tears, only whimpered.

'Well, but, Patty, this is surely a foolish resolution. Why does not Charles Brown stay in England? I told you he should have money until he had procured himself a new situation.'

'It's all of no use, my lady. He wants to go to America to better himself. He's not the sort to be a footman, my lady; such work isn't good enough for him.'

'But he may go farther to

fare worse—you should tell him that; and in any case, you, Patty, ought not to leave this country until you are sure of finding a home elsewhere.'

'I can't let Charles go alone, my lady; he would be taking up with some other girl if I did.'

'I am afraid you will regret acting with this precipitation.'

'Perhaps I shall, my lady; but it can't be helped. What I'm most sorry for is the leaving you.' Hereupon Patty Raggles burst out crying in earnest.

Lady Charmeigh could not see laughter without laughing, nor tears without weeping; so when her maid had left the room she sat down to have a good cry, all comfortably by herself. This by and by produced a reaction under the form of a desire to go to bed and put disagreeables out of mind. But when her ladyship was undressed the sleepiness wore off, and she felt rather inclined to have a cup of tea and read a novel. So she wrapped herself in her dressing-robe and sat down in a cosy armchair opposite the fire, with an amusing book on her lap. It was then nearly midnight, and Patty, after having set the tea-tray, retired to rest. Presently Lady Charmeigh heard the servants putting the chain to the hall-door, and the house became silent. By this time the amusing book had produced the usual effect, and Lady Charmeigh felt drowsy. She closed her eyes, and sank into an agreeable doze.

This had lasted, perhaps, an hour, when she was abruptly roused by a sensation of somebody being present in the room. She opened her eyes, and to her speechless stupefaction saw two tall men standing before her with crape masks on their faces. To scream was impossible in the hideous terror she felt; she could

only rise to her feet and murmur inarticulately, whilst her eyes were distended to twice their natural size. Her brain swam, and she had a vague idea that she was dreaming; but this thought was soon dispelled.

'Now, ma'am, we're not going to hurt you if you don't make a noise,' said one of the men rather kindly than gruffly. 'If you scream, see this;' and he held up the naked blade of a razor.

'But what do you want?' faltered Lady Charmeigh, who was blanched of all colour, and could hardly speak her words.

'Your jewels, ma'am. Give us your keys. Sit quiet, and we sha'n't touch you.'

'Never!' cried Lady Charmeigh, with the courage of the desperate. 'You are wicked men. You may kill me if you like; but, O, help, O!'

As she opened her mouth to cry, one of the men brusquely encircled her with his arms and held her tight, while the other pressed a handkerchief over her mouth and nostrils. There was chloroform on the handkerchief, and so much of it that Lady Charmeigh gasped. For a few seconds she attempted to struggle; but then her limbs relaxed, she drew a deep breath, and sank back unconscious. Her aggressors gently deposited her on the floor.

When Lady Charmeigh came to herself, after an interval of time which she could not reckon, she found she had been robbed of every valuable she possessed. The Charmeigh diamonds were gone to the last one; the very rings on her fingers had been taken; her money, her watch, the silver-gilt mountings of her dressing-case—all had disappeared. The plunder carried off was immense, and the burglary had been managed in the most orderly fashion. The house

was as tranquil as if no deed of evil had been perpetrated there.

It remained tranquil, for Lady Charmeigh made no outcries. Oddly enough, her first sensation on coming to herself was not one of terror. The burglars had not hurt her, and were little likely to do so now that they were gone. As soon as the perception of realities forced itself upon her mind, as soon as she could grasp the extent of her enormous loss, and speculate as to what Sir Peter would think of it, Lady Charmeigh felt, above all, indignation at having been outwitted, and a burning desire to be even with her plunderers. She asked herself who these rascals could be; and straight her thoughts flew to the suspicion that Patty must have had some hand in abetting them.

Why she thought this it would have been difficult for her to say at first, but once the suspicion had shaped itself in her mind, a hundred small side facts came to confirm it. To begin with, Patty's invariably officious zeal about the safety of the jewels; then her recent low spirits and wayward manners; and, again, her connection with that discharged footman, Charles Brown. It somehow seemed to Lady Charmeigh that before fainting she had had time to recognise Charles Brown in one of the two burglars. If this were the case, then, possibly, Patty and Charles had been confederates in the first burglary, and Patty's holiday had only been taken so that she might be out of the range of suspicion when the crime was perpetrated. All this was horribly black, but Lady Charmeigh's eyes seemed to see clear into many things now.

There is in some of those little women who are habitually frivolous a surprising fund of latent

strength. It is not often brought into play; but when needed, it supplies an electrical courage and a large amount of cool craft. It struck Lady Charmeigh by intuition, that if she wanted to recover her diamonds (and she did, with a vengeance), she must make no noise, but simply have Patty watched. She must also begin by practising some deep dissimulation. Accordingly, she neither rang bells nor summoned men-servants—whose fidelity she could little trust—but she took her bedchamber candle and went quietly to Patty's room. For a moment she feared that the girl might have fled with the plunderers and their booty; but no, Patty was in bed, and pretending to be asleep. A lame pretence at best, for there was a candle burning on the chimneypiece, and Patty was but partially undressed—two damning circumstances. Lady Charmeigh, however, took notes with her eyes only, and said nothing to excite alarm.

'Look here, Patty,' she began, with forced calmness; 'don't be frightened at what I am going to say; but there has been a burglary here.'

'A burglary! O my lady!' exclaimed Patty Raggles, with well-feigned terror.

'Hush! don't scream, don't say anything; but listen—we must keep our presence of mind.'

Lady Charmeigh proceeded to narrate the incidents of the outrage, her maid listening the while with haggard eyes and a nervous tremor in all her limbs.

'Well, I repeat, we must make no noise,' concluded Lady Charmeigh quietly; 'if we do we may raise some alarm, and destroy all my chances of recovering the jewels. Only, as soon as daylight comes and you can leave the house without suspicion, you must

go to Scotland-yard and give private information to the police. It is not necessary that I should go with you.'

'Very well, my lady,' said Patty, and Lady Charmeigh distinctly saw a light shoot through her eyes. 'O, O, my lady,' added she suddenly, 'what fears you must have been in! Are you sure you are not hurt?'

'No. Never mind me,' said Lady Charmeigh composedly. 'Try to go to sleep; I am going back to my room. It still wants two or three hours to morning.' Saying this, she went.

She had admirably played her part, and Patty suspected nothing. But the girl's duplicity and wickedness almost sickened her mistress. 'When the wretched creature goes out she won't go to Scotland-yard, I know,' soliloquised Lady Charmeigh. 'She will run to join that man Charles, and then leave the country; but I will have her followed.'

The night wore on wearily enough, but Lady Charmeigh was ready dressed and equipped when Patty appeared before her at eight o'clock, and said she was going to execute her errand. Lady Charmeigh dismissed the girl with a recommendation to return quickly; but as soon as ever Patty was out of the house her ladyship put on her bonnet and went after her. She had to hide herself under the porticos of houses more than once to escape observation, in case the runaway should look round; but she soon had the satisfaction of seeing Patty take a cab. A hansom passed immediately afterwards, and Lady Charmeigh hailed it. A policeman was standing near a lamp-post, and she beckoned to him.

'Here, jump into this cab with me, if you please. I want you to join me in giving chase to some burglars, the worst the world has

ever seen. O, you have no idea what people they are !

Two hours later Lady Charmeigh had recovered possession of all her diamonds. The case was

never mentioned in the papers, for Sir Peter and his wife were willing to hush up the matter. The plunder was all found in a house rented by Charles Brown, who, instead of being prosecuted,

received money to go to America along with Patty. All this was very wrong, compounding of a felony, and so forth ; but as Sir Peter remarked, ' There has been too much fuss already about these Charmeigh diamonds.'

He had the grace to add, though—and this was Lady Charmeigh's best reward—

' A woman who can recover her diamonds as my wife did deserves to have them. Her wits are the best patent safes I know of.'

HOW WE TRIED TIGER-SHOOTING.

THE numerous accidents which have happened of late years amongst tiger-slayers have convinced people that the sport not only is a dangerous one, but that the presence of an experienced hunter amongst the party is essential. In the days I speak of no such theory existed. We considered that we had nothing more to do than to walk up (elephants were *beneath* us) and shoot the beast 'bang in the head,' and then have him carried home in triumph to our tents. Our party (consisting of myself and two other young subalterns) thought so, and we started *to do so*.

Forty-five minutes by train, and a stiff walk of two hours, brought us to our tents.

The ground had not been hunted for years, and was situated in the centre of the Bhore ghauts. The spot selected for our first encampment was a solitary village shut in on every side by towering mountains, clothed with impenetrable 'covers.' Our shikarees (native hunters) told us that these mountains were full of tigers, bisons, bears, panthers, and every conceivable kind of game. As we sat listening round the camp-fire that night, there was not one amongst us who did not feel certain in his own heart that the morrow would see him fairly on the road to fame. In this state of excitement if we slept at all it was certainly due to the effects of the brandy-punch, in which we duly drank 'Success to our first trip!'

Behold us, then, the following morning *fully equipped*, in our

own estimation, for the hunt. As far as I remember at this distance of time, we had six rifles and one gun between us, borrowed from every quarter, and each of a different 'bore.' One of mine was a single-barrelled 'Jacob,' the lock of which possessed the unhappy knack of working when not required.

We had been told that pebbles were very useful in the mouth to allay thirst; so, determined to be practical, we put three each in our pockets, and dispensed with two out of three chaguls (water-bags), and thus we started. Overladen with useless ammunition, puffed up with a kind of *va victis* feeling, and wearing ill-fitting and inferior boots, a queer party we must have looked.

A tigress had killed a pig overnight, and we felt that such an outrage must be quickly revenged. Up hill and down dale, slipping, sliding, jumping, running, we went for about two hours, during which time we had ejected our pebbles, and the water-bag was empty. However, we eventually reached our station, a bare little hill with a slope; at the bottom a small ravine about six or seven feet wide, and as many deep; and beyond that the hill-side, along which the tigress was to be driven. We seated ourselves in a row on the barest spot we could find, lest anything should divert our aim, and solemnly agreed that nothing should induce us to fire until the animal had jumped the ravine. The drive commenced, and we had not long to wait. Trotting

calmly along the hill-side straight towards us came the tigress. On the other side of the ravine, and about 150 yards from it, was one solitary bush; all the rest of the hill-side was short grass. At about 200 yards the tigress of course viewed us, and stopped for a minute to look about. The excitement was intense. We had never contemplated what we were to do in such an emergency, and we consequently all acted independently, and poured in a volley. The tigress now rushed into the bush, and we, without knowing why, opened a running fire upon it. This could not last long, and some stray shot having roused the animal, she left her cover and charged straight for us. Never shall I forget the scene that followed. We, perfectly convinced that now was the time, seized our guns, and ran helter-skelter to meet the tigress, and fired at her promiscuously. Our shikarees and gun-bearers yelled to us from behind to stop, the tigress roared in front, and the men who had driven her out scuttled in every direction. In this manner we arrived on our side of the ravine, and the tigress on hers, when luckily two stray shots disabled her, and sent her headlong and helpless into it. We now discovered that our only loaded piece was the old 'Jacob'; and after three unsuccessful efforts the handle condescended to come down, and make our first tiger an accomplished fact.

The turmoil over, we congratulated and complimented each other on the coolness and bravery we had displayed, and returned in triumph to our tents. I may mention that on attempting to fire our spare guns three of them were found loaded with bullets only.

The talk at the camp-fire that night was 'tall' indeed. We had become great and mighty hunters,

in truth. Our shortcomings were glossed over as every-day occurrences, while every lucky shot was enlarged to the utmost. We were considerably startled when our men (who were really good hunters) positively refused to sanction any repetition of that day's reckless sport, as they did not intend to risk their lives unarmed. However, we considered they were bound to risk their own lives to show us sport for their pay (viz. four annas, or sixpence, a day).

Early next morning we received news that two tigers were sitting under some trees well up in the gorge in the ghauts; and we positively made arrangements what we should do with them when they should be brought in that evening.

The road was difficult and steep, and finding there was no available place at the south end of the ravine, we went round and seated ourselves on the top of a bank, commanding the path by which the tigers were said to be in the habit of coming and going.

The beaters had directions to drive the game towards us. After a false alarm or two, we saw the tall reeds of the cover violently agitated, and in a moment out sprang our two friends. When within twenty or thirty yards they perceived us, and immediately sprang into cover towards us. Now although they were so near us—for we could see their approach by the occasional shiver of the grass reeds—yet so stealthy were their movements and so close did they squat, that we could not catch sight of them. At last I saw the head of one rise slowly up; but before I could point it out to my companions the brute had retired. We now threw stones down into the cover and fired random shots, but for some time without success.

At length with a kind of deep growl one tiger jumped into a watercourse immediately underneath us, disappearing as quickly. I saluted him with a ball through the loins as he sprang past my post, which he acknowledged with an angry roar. Both my companions also fired, and the one who had a clear range greeted his arrival with sundry balls in divers parts of his body, which made him roar out continuously; he then disappeared in a large jungle on our right rear.

Had we followed, it would have been a case of hands and knees, as the ascent was both steep and slippery; so we reluctantly gave up all pursuit of No. 1 for the present, and turned our attention to No. 2. This animal still kept close in the cover, and although we rolled large stones down into every part of it, yet there was no getting him out. We now resolved to shift our ground, and crossing the watercourse ten or fifteen yards beyond, we scrambled up the opposite bank, where our beaters met us. I had scarcely planted my feet on the opposite bank, when with a mighty roar out sprang No. 2 from the cover, and scuttled down the watercourse at the top of his speed. Then followed a scene which defies description. Excited almost to madness at seeing the game so close, I seized my guns one after the other, and commenced snipe-shooting at the flying brute. My companions were cooler; but still when the tiger had disappeared we found that not one of us had a loaded barrel. We saw him fall twice on his way down the stream, so we felt certain he was wounded.

Our next step was to advance along the top of the bank till we got down to the cover whence the tiger originally came. From this elevated situation we could

see our friend No. 2 had taken refuge in the watercourse at the end of the ravine under a shady bush, and we fired some random shots to try and dislodge him, but without success. A consultation, solemn and, on the part of the natives, stormy, followed our failure. We none of us liked the look of the jungle, yet we knew we should have to force a passage through it, as the only way of getting the tiger. Finally we settled to form a wedge-shaped procession, putting ourselves at the head, and thus advance on the foe. To work we went, and, howling and yelling as if for bare life, we advanced on the bush, getting tolerably torn in the process. The tiger let us come within four or five yards of him, when up he sprang, and galloped through the long reed cover to his original den, without even giving us the chance of a shot at him. We now divided our party; one of us with the beaters went round to the south of the jungle, while I with one companion and our gun-bearers took up an opposite position. At it we went again, the beaters' yells this time getting a little fainter, as these gallant gentry, although they were ready enough to reproach *us* with cowardice for refusing to come down and beat the ravine, by no means felt comfortable, and it was quite laughable to see each one in succession trying to bolt. No. 2 was getting sulky, and held close for some time; at last he came away with a rush, passing about twenty yards to my front, but edging away to the right. Both my companions hit him on the shoulder, but I did not get a shot at all; the brute then turned to charge our party, when a shot caught him across the loins, and crippled him sufficiently to induce him to alter his mind, and, relinquishing all warlike movements,

he crawled away into the thick jungle. We now joined our forces, and all together commenced to beat down the hill, where the jungle, being very thick and close, and the ground covered with creepers, rendered walking most difficult. We had slowly advanced about half-way through, when a beater called out that we had passed the tiger. We all retraced our steps, and examined what at first sight appeared to be a yellow mass. No. 2's tail, however, put the doubt to flight, and the triumphant shikaree looked round on his would-be doubters. His triumph was shortlived, however, for on looking round he perceived one of my companions on his knees about to fire. He threw down his gun, and, turning a somersault over the nearest bush, bolted as hard as he could possibly go. The effect of the shot was wonderful. The first roar was quite enough for the beaters and shikarees, who, throwing down guns, sticks, clothes, in their flight, all bolted, with the exception of two men, who might as well have followed their comrades for all the use they were to us. We were thus left alone to face the brute, with only a rifle apiece. My companion, who fired, remained in the same position for a minute or so, and catching sight of the tiger's shoulder as he came round the tree and downhill towards us, fired his last ball and brought the brute down on his side, but he instantly rose and began staggering down the hill.

The tiger now advanced straight upon me, but on account of the thick jungle we could only catch occasional glances of him as he reeled along. As his shoulder came broadside towards one of my companions he fired. Unfortunately, however, his right barrel missed fire, but the bullet

from the left caught the tiger on the elbow-bone and floored him. Up he got again, however, and bestowing a look of rage and pain on his paw, which he held up for the purpose, he gave a howl which I shall not forget in a hurry, and continued his staggering course towards us. He was now about four yards in front of us, with his chest exposed. I immediately deposited a ball in it, and the brute fell, but rose almost instantly; I fired again immediately, and again the tiger came down, but still again he rose! I came to the conclusion that the beast was not born to be killed. All this passed in about a couple of minutes, which appeared hours to us, and when he came up quite close we had only empty barrels and no means of loading. I turned round in hope of finding a gun, but tripped and fell almost immediately. The last shikaree's wits escaped with our last shot; he stumbled with a spear he had in his hand, and ran it through the leg of one of my companions, bringing him to the ground as if he had been shot. I had hardly been down half a minute when the tiger seized me; his teeth rang together like castanets as they met in the fleshy part of my leg. We both rolled over together to the place where my friend had just been brought to the ground by the spear. The tiger, letting go of me, now attacked my friend, whose arm and knee he bit and tore severely. Although close together we could see nothing of each other, on account of the thick jungle, but I heard a smothered, munching, growling sound, and a torn, bleeding, hatless figure rose from my side and rushed down the hill. I instantly did the same, while our other friend ran up a tree. My wounded companion, more exhausted than I, fell first

in some long grass at the bottom of the slope, and I, managing a few yards more, gained the summit of a small bank, from which I could view the scene of our well-deserved disaster. First and foremost, full in sight and most uncomfortably close, was the tiger, most indisputably 'monarch of all he surveyed,' walking up and down, lashing his tail and roaring hideously. Perched on the top of a slender tree was one of my friends, exchanging looks with the tiger. Suddenly the branch broke, and down he came within three yards of the savage beast. He ran quickly up-hill to where I was, and fortunately the brute was too much exhausted to attempt to follow him. Here we were within twenty yards of this brute of a tiger, who had eaten all our bullets, and still would not die. The beaters now suddenly reappeared, and stated that one of their number was up in a tree, under which the tiger was now sitting, and that he had a loaded gun with him. Too much wounded to move away, the tiger deliberately watched his victim. At last the man, bringing his rifle down to within a foot of the tiger's head, fired, and—missed! The infuriated beast reared himself up against the tree, and, glaring at the man as only a tiger can glare, gave a terrific roar, and suddenly man and rifle came thumping down the tree! The tiger bit a piece out of his side and left him, and he rolled down the hill. His companions, who had been silent and helpless spectators, now raised a shout and rushed to his rescue, picked him up, and hurried away with him to his village. They would have left us to our fate if my friend and I had not each seized two men, and

calling our shikarees insisted on their remaining to help us to move our wounded comrade. Our position now was remarkably pleasant; two out of three of us were wounded, one of whom was quite insensible. It was nearly dark and there was no moon, and that fiend of a tiger was still walking up and down within fifty yards of us, making night hideous with his roaring. Our companion was severely bitten and mangled in the left arm and leg, and utterly helpless. We cut down a sapling, and improvised a temporary hammock in which to convey him to our camp, and it took every available man to carry him. I shuffled along with the help of a stick, and so we started on that weary eight-mile night march over the ghaut to our tents.

Medical assistance having been sent for our wounds were attended to next day, and we were conveyed crippled and disheartened into the station we had left rejoicing only five days previously; disgusted at the sudden termination to our leave, but thankful for our wonderful escape, and all three determined to hunt tigers whenever and wherever we could find them. My comrade had to leave the service, as his wounds rendered him permanently inefficient. As for me, some months on a sick-bed gave me plenty of time to meditate on tigers, and the proper method of hunting them. I have killed many since then, but have never forgotten the lessons I was forced to learn that day, when I got my first, and I sincerely trust my last, tiger-bite. No one could be induced to enter the ravine which was the scene of our disaster for three weeks. When they did the tiger was found dead, and rotting on the field of battle.

CLUB CAMEOS.

MR. F. M.

It has never been my wish to pose in that favourite attitude of the old man, the *laudator temporis acti*. Whatever good points the Past possessed, no sane person can but admit that in a comparison with the Present it appears at a disadvantage. The strides that progress has made within the last two generations have been enormous. We have erased from our statute-book the terrible punishments which were freely awarded to the pettiest offender against the law. We have substituted legitimate recruiting for the severities of the press-gang. Education has been brought, like the morning's milk, to every man's door. Birth and incapacity are no longer the sole qualifications which command high office. Coarse oaths and heavy potations are not now the distinctive characteristics of the fine gentleman. We wipe out insults not by running our adversary through with our sword, but by 'running him in' through our solicitor. Our pleasures are more refined, our tone of thought higher, our vices more veiled, than in former days. Yet there is one point where, it seems to me, the Past can somewhat lord it over the Present—men rode then better to hounds.

Two causes have led, I think, to our inferiority in this respect. At the present day the breed of horses, owing to early racing and everything being sacrificed to speed, has deteriorated; the old-fashioned hunter of my youth, temperate with hounds, clever at his fences, and up to fifteen

or sixteen stone, can now only be obtained at the cost of a respectable annuity. It is no exaggeration to say that a sound weight-carrying hunter, which forty or fifty years ago could be bought for some eighty guineas, would now command from three to five hundred guineas. Men, therefore, whose flesh is more solid than their purses (and after thirty light weights are the exception), and who do not like to abandon hunting, ride inferior cattle, and consequently follow the hounds with a prudence which is utterly incompatible with true sport. Again, where the first cause cannot be attributed, the second cause often comes into play. We are living in an age of intense competition and of incessant excitement, which put a terrible strain on our nervous system. We telegraph instead of write, we travel express, we amass wealth with a rapidity unheard of in the old days of commerce, we do everything at high pressure, and hence quiet and repose are anodynes of which we know less each year we grow older. Among the most common of the maladies which the modern physician has to contend against are diseases of the nervous system. Paralysis, insomnia, and insanity meet us everywhere—ills of the flesh which in the days when steam and electricity were undiscovered were comparatively seldom heard of.

I am not hinting that because as a nation we are more nervous we are less courageous

than our forefathers. Should the occasion ever arise when it was necessary to make a call upon English pluck and to put faith in the manliness of old England, the response would, I am sure, be as loyal and as eager as ever. But there is a difference between the exercise of courage when required for grave and urgent cir-

cumstances, and the display of pluck when mere pleasure and amusement are at stake. Let any one who cavils at these remarks watch the conduct of the next field he finds himself with. He will see men very particular as to their get-up—their hats, their natty ties, their well-cut coats, their spotless leathers, their well-

fitting tops—all that the hatter, the haberdasher, the tailor, the breeches-maker, and the boot-maker can show of superior workmanship. He will see their horses groomed to a turn and eager for the sport, and then—after all this preparation and anticipation—can anything be more pitiable, when the most abject of fences has to be negotiated, than to watch the rush of cavalry towards an open

gate? In a field of a hundred and fifty how few ride, as in the days of old, straight to bounds, taking everything in their flight, and from find to finish never allowing the distance to increase between them and the pack!

Who at the present day will have most followers, he who is 'a nailer' across country, or he who has a perfect knowledge of the local geography, who knows

instinctively the course the fox will take, who declines to jump the slightest obstacle, but who is acquainted with every gate, gap, and bridle-path which will eventually bring him up with the hounds? Still if many of our modern 'sportsmen' funk their fences they regain their courage by the time they have dressed for dinner. To listen, whilst the decanters are making their pleasant rounds, to some of these loquacious 'pursuers' would render the redoubtable Assheton Smith himself, were he credulous, wild with envy. O, the brooks that were cleared, the post and rails that were leaped, the bullfinches that were gone through, the doubles that were so cleverly taken, and—O, the lies that were told! If our young Nimrods could only ride as well in reality as they do in imagination, they would be the finest cavalry in the world. Without disparagement to the pluck of the present supporters of our noble packs of hounds, I must confess, that in the earlier half of this century hunting was more of a business than the pleasant outdoor gathering it has now become, and that during the run there was more action at the time and less talk of it afterwards—from those who had not been in it. Men hunted because they loved the excitement of the chase—a stiff country only spurring them on to more vigorous efforts—and not because they wished to exhibit the bravery of their costume at the expense of the bravery of themselves. The 'coffee-house' sportsman is a creation of this generation.

From these disparaging remarks there is one member of the Caravanserai to whom they cannot be applied. Among the 'hard riders of England,' Ashby Folville, the popular master of

the Slottesloe foxhounds—the levellest, most graceful, most powerful pack in the country—holds a prominent place. Bad at his books, he is one of those men who excels in every kind of manly sport. Though now past forty, there are few young men who do not own themselves vanquished by him, where gun or rifle, rod or spear, tennis-ball or cricket-ball, is concerned. Sport is the only atmosphere he breathes or cares to breathe. I know no man to whom an accident which would render him a cripple for life would be more intolerable. Rob him of his enjoyment of physical exercise, and you deprive him of all that makes existence delightful. When he is not hunting he is shooting; when he is neither hunting nor shooting he is salmon fishing, sculling, cricketing, mountaineering, or in some other form getting rid of the superfluous energy with which he is so abundantly blessed. But good man as he is all round, it is to the king of sports that he swears the most ardent attachment. What the meeting of Parliament is to the ambitious legislator, what the first day of term is to the lawyer, what the beginning of the season is to the beauty, is the first Monday in November to the jovial squire of Highthorpe Abbey.

And small blame to him, as the Irishman says. In the whole round of pleasure is there any excitement more intoxicating, is there any exercise more health-giving both for man and woman, is there any better training for the acquisition of courage, is there any sight more picturesque, than hunting? It is the only innocent pleasure which never palls upon us. The early rising and the anticipation of the day's sport give us an appetite such as all the tumblers of medicinal waters can never

excite. As we ride to cover, Nature, clad in the russet hue of early winter decay—like a woman, Nature never tries to please so much as when her beauty is on the wane—offers us vistas of sylvan scenery, views of down and dell bathed in the morning dews, and studies of clouds which stimulate all that is of the artist

and of the poet within us. Conversation is never so easy and so brisk as when we meet at the covert-side, smoking our last cigar before the business of the day begins, and criticising the mounts of our friends and the fair faces of the women who enliven the scene by their presence. Then the pause of ex-

pectation, and the encouraging pull from our flask, whilst the hounds are drawing the covert ; then the deep long-drawn-out note proclaiming a find, the chorus of the pack, and away we follow ; our first fence taken, our confidence is restored, and we are ready to hold our own with the wickedest. In the excitement of the run, the light south-west breeze stirring the air around us,

the scent breast high, the pack—how well their spotted sides stand out against the background of the rich greensward!—running really fast, our mount full of heart and go,—at such a supreme moment we know nothing of physical ills, we ignore all the anxieties that have been oppressing us ; disease, debt, care, misery, are thrown off with the hounds ; and for one

day, at least, the wicked cease to trouble us, and the weary are at rest.

The sport never loses its interest. When gout or rheumatism compels us to exchange the saddle for the phaeton, like the ruined gamester, whose greatest delight it is to hover round the fatal board of green cloth, to watch the fall of the cards, and to speculate as to what colour or number he would back, though he is powerless to stake a farthing, so we are always ready to drive the ladies to the meet, to pass our comments upon the points of the hounds and the horses, to have a friendly chat with the redcoats ere they start, and to see as much of the sport as the line the fox takes and a knowledge of the neighbouring roads will permit. It is true there is another side to the picture. The crashing fall, the gate taken off its hinges, which serves as the impromptu stretcher, the darkened room, the weekly six guineas from the Accidental till we get right again, or it may be that that pension need never be required. In all sports there is a certain amount of danger ; but this I will maintain, that when we consider the number of men who ride to hounds, and compare that number with the accidents which occur during a season, few will admit that hunting is the dangerous pastime its enemies allege.

If the noblest study be man, I am sure the noblest specimen of his race is an English gentleman. He is courteous, yet manly, which your foreigner so seldom is ; he is proud, yet not haughty—proud with the proper sense of self-respect ; he has a large stake in the country, and he is conscious of it ; he comes of a line that has been gentle for centuries, and he is not ashamed of the fact. He may be

a profound scholar, or he may have only enough learning to examine the accounts of his steward, to say a few words without breaking down at an agricultural dinner, and to take his seat amongst his brother magistrates without disgracing the bench ; but where will you find honour more unsullied, hospitality more generous, and truth more loved for its own sake than in the order to which he belongs ? England, in spite of her climate and the diatribes of her critics, is his ideal of all that a country should be. Whatever be the creed he professes, or the political principles to which he adheres, neither his religion nor his party is permitted to interfere with his patriotism. He is an Englishman first—a disciple or politician afterwards.

Ashby Folville is no bad type of his class. In tastes and sentiments he is a thorough Englishman. He thinks there is no country like England, for in no country can you spend so much time out of doors. For beauty and wholesome surroundings he thinks his own fair countrywomen are first, and the rest nowhere. When he travels he is amused with the foreigners he comes across, though he never fails to regard them as an inferior race to his own. In his opinion there is no man out of England who can ride or handle a team without coming to grief ; no man but an Englishman who has an idea what real sport is ; no gentleman like an English gentleman, and no pluck like English pluck. His face and figure are eminently English. Though he rides well-nigh sixteen stone, his height, the broad powerful shoulders, and the mighty limbs take off from the appearance of his bulk, and make him look a lighter weight than he really is. His face, with its healthy complexion, gives signs

of the out-door life he so dearly loves, and were it not for the finely-cut features it would not escape the stigma of coarseness. I suppose he has his cares, yet they must sit lightly on him, for the keenest observer fails to detect worry on that bright open countenance. To watch him cheering on his hounds, to hear his jovial laugh, to listen to his simple honest chat, are all as good as change of air to the bilious and the acrid. Yet that well-shaped mouth of his can give tongue to pretty vigorous expressions should a young farmer head the fox, or ride over a favourite hound. If a man be heir to a good name, if his fortune be ample, if his health be sound, and if he have brains enough to carry him through his ordinary duties, but not brains enough to make him ambitious and discontented, life, let the moralist preach as he may, is to such a one full of enjoyment from find to finish.

The possessor of one of the finest seats in the country, most happily married, rich, well-born, the squire of Highthorpe Abbey has little cause to grumble at his lot. Genial, generous, hospitable, he is the first M.F.H. who has hunted his country to the satisfaction of its neighbourhood. Before he took over the Slottesloe hounds, incessant were the squabbles in the district; master after master succeeded to the command of the pack, yet always came to loggerheads with the subscribers; the farmers wired their fences, and breathed threatenings and slaughter against all who dared to ride over their land; petty spites were at work, and permission was often refused for neighbouring coverts to be drawn; the pack deteriorated; foxes were plenty, yet no sport could be got; and at last the question of

selling the hounds was seriously discussed. At this juncture Ashby Folville stepped in. He had just succeeded to the paternal estates, and to a father who was as fond of chemistry as the son was of sport. He agreed to take over the hounds. He took a pleasure in their working and management, and he would pay keepers, stoppers, damage, everything, himself. Need we say so liberal an offer was gladly accepted? Young, wealthy, and known to be a venturesome rider, the country soon rallied round him. What was denied to crabbed elderly men was granted to him. Neighbouring landowners sank their jealousies; the farmers were won over, and became the most ardent of the supporters of the hunt; gorse covers, where the woodlands were deficient, were judiciously planted. At the end of some four years the number of hounds on the books reached forty couples, boasting some of the best blood from the finest kennels in the kingdom.

Slowly but steadily the fame of the pack increased. Hunting-boxes in the neighbourhood were let at double their former rents. A large joint-stock hotel, with the most extensive stabling, was erected at Highthorpe. Men came down from London with their horses to hunt with the Slottesloe, as they went into the shires to follow the Pytchley or the Quorn. The name of 'the squire' became as a household word in the sporting circles of the country. It was known that he was no dandy master of hounds, with no more idea of the points of a foxhound than an otter has of flying, and that he did not leave all the work to his whips, as certain 'governors' of yachts leave all the work to their 'captains.' Mounted on his powerful brown horse, it must indeed be a quick thing which

fails to see him, close up at the finish. In spite of every obstacle that falls in his way to negotiate, he can tell you the name of every hound that was leading during any part of the run; he has an eye for country such as few cavalry officers possess; his ear, never at fault, tells him in an instant the course his hounds are taking, and when sound is useless as a guide, he seems to have an instinctive knowledge of all the turns and dodges the fox is up to. It is not therefore surprising that when its master shows such sport 'the Slottesloe' should be a great favourite with all who can and dare ride, and that the right to wear the uniform of the hunt (olive green with buff facings) should be much coveted.

Every November finds me invariably a guest at Highthorpe Abbey. Both the squire and his charming wife know the art of hospitality to perfection. As a rule, most country houses are very enjoyable from the hour of dinner to the end of the evening—pleasant people, well-bred, well-dressed, a good table, the produce of favourite bins, chat, music, billiards, whist, and the wind up in the smoking-room, form a combination of delights which cannot but please even the most difficult. But it is the early part of the day which is such a trial at many country houses. Can there be anything more depressing than that awful meal of breakfast at several houses? It is served punctually at half-past nine, and your host regards it as a slight upon himself if you do not put in an appearance. You have sat up late, you are nervous, you are irritable, you have no appetite, you want to have your cup of tea and bread-and-butter in bed, and wait till your letters arrive. And then you are bound to talk and be

agreeable, and take an interest in the children, and be as lively as if you were at dinner. There is no meet anywhere in the neighbourhood that day, and perhaps the weather does not tempt you to go out shooting. People have been invited without any regard to each other's tastes and habits. You think one man looks like an actor and that you will have some fun, and you find he is a missionary. You essay to get up a flirtation with a pretty girl, and she will have none of it, but bores you with questions upon scientific subjects of which you have never heard. The few pleasant people in the house are always in their rooms writing letters. You think you will have a game of billiards, but the only man who can play got up at seven in the morning to ride twenty miles to cover. You wander into the library, but there are no modern novels, and you care for no other kind of literature. The host is engaged his own way; the hostess is engaged hers; girls you would like to know have formed themselves into little groups, and you fear to intrude. And you end by mooning down to the stable with one or two friends equally bored with yourself, to smoke.

Some people think when once they have invited you to stay with them, they have done all that is required, and you must amuse yourself as you best can. To make country-house life agreeable to most men, you ought to be able to afford either excellent sport, when a man will accommodate himself to dull society and indifferent cooking, or if the sport that you can offer be only moderate, your house should be filled with pleasant people, and your *chef*, like Cæsar's wife, beyond reproach. At Highthorpe Abbey the visitor has little cause to grumble. The house is always full during the winter with charm-

ing married women, pretty girls, amusing men, and with one or two celebrities in art and literature to give a tone to the conversation at dinner and to assist the ladies in their sketches. If you feel lazy after the severities of the past week, you tell the comely Hebe who brings you your morning cup of tea that you are not going

down to breakfast, and accordingly a fire is lit in your room, your *déjeuner* is served up-stairs, and, being in the bachelors' wing, you can smoke, write your letters, or read the country papers without intrusion—you are left to yourself. If you have given no orders about your horse, or do not make one of the shooting party, or are not seen

about the place, it is wisely concluded that you wish to be alone. If you do not appear at luncheon it is supposed that you are poorly, and then kindly inquiries are made after you.

A strong bond of union exists between the host and his visitors. Everybody in the house rides, and is devoted to hunting. The Squire hunts his own hounds four days a week, and you are within an easy

ride to cover of the Brookby Holt harriers and the Revesby and Hawthorne fox-hounds. If the visitor at Highthorpe be a glutton, he can hunt his six days a week, so far as hounds are concerned. Everything is redolent of the pleasures of the chase. At every turn of the corridors of the old house you come across valets, either taking to, or bringing from, their masters tops, leathers, and

pink or black coats. The end of your chamber's bell-rope is ornamented with a fox's brush, your inkstand is a fox's head, and the handle of your paper-cutter a fox's pad. Over your mantel-piece, side by side with the cards that tell you of the arrival and departure of the London trains and the hour when the post goes out, is a list of the meets

of the Slottesloe and of the neighbouring packs. When you go down to breakfast (no formal long table, but little tables scattered about the room, at which you can be as sulky or as sociable as you please), you see ladies in their habits—the cut and fit plainly suggestive of hard riding—and the men in all their bravery of pink, or

in Melton coats and gorgeous waistcoats. Talk to them of Patti *la Diva* or of Thalberg *la petite*, yet to most of them there is no music like the deep-throated chorus of the pack, or even of the tramp of the hoofs of the horses as they are brought round.

Yet, enthusiastic as all the inmates of Highbury are about hunting—if you do not hunt you will be about as cheerful there as a

salmon on a gravel walk—it is the rule of the house that during dinner all hunting topics are to be strictly tabooed. As you take your tea in the library with the ladies before going to dress, you may talk about the run and the fences you took or the 'croppers' you came as much as you please; you may resume the subject when you adjourn to the smoking-room; but during dinner, and for a couple of

hours afterwards, you are not to pose as the one-idea'd man, whose powers of conversation are limited entirely to the subject of fox-hunting. It is a most excellent rule, and, when one remembers the mendacity and monotony that so frequently characterise this kind of talk, one well worthy of adoption. It does not follow that because a man is fond of hunting he is necessarily incapable of anything better. Some of the most distinguished men on the bench, in the senate, the camp, the studio, in literature and in science, have been enrolled in the ranks of the hard riders of England. Nor, on the other hand, is it a natural consequence that because a man runs down hunting is he either intellectual or humane. One of the dullest and savagest of critics that it has ever been my misfortune to meet is as sentimental as a schoolgirl over 'the poor fox;' but give him a book to review or a picture to criticise, and where is his charity, his tenderness, or his humanity? It has been expended upon the sufferings of hunted vermin, and is exhausted when he has to deal with his fellow-creatures. Ah, my bilious friend, take a few lessons in riding—even have a day with the Old Surrey—and your invigorated system will soon teach you that all who differ from you are neither so utterly in the wrong nor so hopelessly idiotic as your jaundiced imagination conceives.

Shortly after his arrival at Highthorpe, one of the first duties that the visitor—if he belong to what is ironically called the sterner sex—has to perform is to inspect the kennels and the stables. Skirting the nobly timbered park, over the racecourse, situated in the hollow, where the Hunters' Stakes are run for in due season, and pausing occasionally to watch the red and

fallow deer feeding beneath the beech-trees, clothed in all the golden glories of their russet garb, our destination is soon reached. The kennels and stables at Highthorpe are a splendid range of buildings, erected at an enormous cost by the Squire, and freely supplied with water pumped up by steam to an elevation which commands the whole of the buildings. The huntsman's house is close to the kennels; and many a vicar is worse lodged. After a rigid inspection of the dog-pack and the 'ladies'—it is best not to hazard a criticism if you are a duffer, for there are few better judges of the points of a hound than Ashby Folville—brought out on the sward for your express benefit, and having had the young hounds drafted out for special examination, you are nothing loth—for perhaps you have been nervous as to the calves of your legs—to be taken over the stables. The stable-yard consists of an immense square. On one side is a covered riding-school; on the opposite side is a magnificent range of loose boxes; on the third side is an equally magnificent range of stalls; whilst on the fourth side are the boiling-houses, meal-stores, and feeding chambers. Men are never shy when invited to Highthorpe about asking leave to bring down their horses, for room can always be obtained for them; whilst, on the other hand, men who have no horses can easily be accommodated with nags; for the Squire's stud is an extensive one. 'If you can ride I can mount you,' says Folville to the young men who come down from the University to spend their Christmastide with him. However, he would not give his dearest friend leave to lay his legs over certain valuable animals at the north end of the stable, which constitute the

Squire's own lot. When a man pays from three to seven hundred guineas for his hunters he is justified in being selfish.

When a frost sets in, or during a couple of months in the season (chiefly spent at Lord's), the Squire turns up frequently at the Caravanserai, preferring the gaiety of that establishment to the sedateness of Boodle's. He knows everybody worth knowing in the club; and we to whom he has been civil in the country do our best to return his hospitality. When Mrs. Folville gives a dance, and though she is not a fashionable dame as the London world counts fashion, we of the club take care to send her a strong contingency from our best waltzing division, so that there shall be no lack of good

partners. Her little people are always being taken to the play; indeed the governess has remonstrated more than once, as these attentions, she says, interfere with the studies of her charges. When her boys get an *exeat*, and none of the family are in town, there are always plenty of us glad to receive the lads, and to send them on their way rejoicing with a good tip. As for me—my age justifies such conduct—I am always charmed if I can act as Mrs. Folville's escort, or in any way show my appreciation of the hospitality and kindness it has been my good fortune, winter after winter, to receive at that pleasantest of country houses—Highthorpe Abbey.

WOMEN'S TOYS.

WHEN a chord in the harp is broken,
 Though the others their music retain,
 It hangs unstrung, and shall ne'er respond
 To the player's touch again.

Long since, in my early manhood,
 Full of promise, of hope and joy,
 My heart's best string was broken,
 When a woman crushed her toy.

My life yet runs as calmly,
 But that one chord is dumb;
 And however rudely they strike it,
 No answering echoes come.

C. T. C.

MRS. LANCASTER'S RIVAL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS IN HER OWN CHATEAU.'

CHAPTER I.

ON THE BANKS OF THE MORA.

THERE is a broad river in the West, which from its source among the moors flows down between banks of dark granite rock and chestnut wood, with a wide curving bend now and then, where a rushy meadow comes down and pushes itself out into the stream, but keeping throughout its steady stately course to the sea. Other rivers flow into it, and at the salmon weir, where the rocks draw near and hang over it, and the water above the weir lies in dark still shadowy pools, that below rises and falls with the tide, so far inland does the strong salt-water make its way. But still for miles the river flows down between varied banks of meadow and rock and wood, with low gray cottages peeping out among the green, and here and there a great house high up above, its long lawns and flights of steps stretching to the river-side. Then the banks draw back, and the river spreads out broad and strong, with a ripple of small waves on its surface, even in the summer weather, fit to carry great ships; a home for the fishing-boats that lie and rock on its bosom, and for the light little pleasure steamers that pass up and down day after day through more than half the year.

And now the river takes the colours of the sea; it is blue and green and gray as the clouds pass over it, and has left all its brown behind; it goes on, itself part of

the sea, with currents strong enough to turn the ironclads round as they lie there in harbour. One more river joins it, almost as broad and beautiful, and together they flow down past more woods, past houses large and small, past dock-yards and a town, past a crowd of ships and boats, under black batteries that seem strangely out of place in the beautiful mouth of the river; and so on, full of glory and usefulness, to their home in the great fresh blue bay.

There are many rivers in England better known, but none better worth knowing, than the Mora and her sister the Penyr; true rivers of the West, in their grandeur, solemnity, and cheerfulness. They are valued highly enough at Morebay, where they flow together into the sea; but if you wish to know and love them well, St. Denys is the place to learn that lesson.

It is a little stony town, on the opposite bank to Morebay, and three miles inland, standing not far above the rocky point where the Penyr flows into the Mora. From the quays on the river-bank, always alive with fishermen and women and children, who are perhaps more at home on the water than on land, a labyrinth of narrow stone streets or lanes, some of them literally as steep as the roof of a house, go climbing up the side of the hill. They look as if a push given to one of the topmost houses would send them all tumbling and crumbling together down into the water. They are all gray, with here and there

a red-tiled roof; but, of course, in that country, a hundred dashes of bright colour are ready to delight one's eyes and make one quite sure that gray is the best of backgrounds. Walls and roofs are gay with red and yellow stonecrop; any bit of wayside bank is draped with delicate fern; from the window of the most tumbledown house a garland of flowers is hanging out, drooping and trailing over the rugged wall. Fore-street is itself as steep as any street of them all, and has not much more regularity in its shops and houses. Some of the upper ones are modernised, and made as much as possible like those at Morebay or anywhere else; but others have long low dim windows and stone-arched doors, and it needs a little resolution to dive into their dark interiors. The long wagon-roofed church, with its square tower, stands off Fore-street, in a square of its own, with trees and grass. Up above this part of the town there are one or two new-looking roads, with houses standing in their own gardens, all perched crookedly about—for there is scarcely, perhaps, a square yard of level ground in St. Denys. But here, from the brow of the hill, the views are most beautiful, and Miss Northcote could never leave her own door, unless it was pouring with rain, without stopping to look round and be thankful. Yet she had lived at St. Denys all her life. But with some people—and I think one likes them best—familiarity breeds anything but contempt.

That June evening the Mora was gleaming blue, and the distant houses were pink and gold, and the soft deep green of woods and fields seemed to make the picture quite perfect. A little puff of steam on the other side of the river, between her and the soft

hazy distance of the hills, told Miss Northcote that the train was coming, and that she must set off at once to the station. For there was a railway at St. Denys, winding into it from Morebay, crossing the great iron bridge and coming at once into the little station, passing above the roofs and chimneys of a great many of the houses, so much older than itself. Thirty years ago the only way of crossing the river had been by boats, and the old inhabitants were quite satisfied. Now they had a railway and a chain-ferry, and they found themselves none the better for it.

Miss Northcote walked along her own stony lane, and turned into the nearest road leading down to the station. Old General Hawke, of Pensand Castle, drove past in his brougham, and recognising her graceful walk before he overtook her, bent forward and bowed to her politely. He had a high opinion of her, and often pointed her out as a specimen of the best and oldest type of west-country lady. And certainly the General was not wrong in that. Miss Northcote may have been five-and-forty, but her figure had lost none of the lithe upright grace of youth; she had the handsome delicate profile, clear skin, good dark gray eyes, and jet black hair of the best-looking of her countrywomen.

The General, having got out of his carriage at the station gate, walked a few steps to meet her, and turned back with her to the platform. He was a handsome man still, though near eighty, with a long nose and a long white moustache.

'It is a long time since we met,' said he. 'I ought to have called, but you must forgive me. I seldom go out. I am a prisoner in my house and garden. At my

age one is odious to one's self and everybody else. Don't you think so?

'Not at all,' said Miss Northcote, laughing. 'I quite disagree with you.'

'Thank you: you are very kind, but I feel—ah! I won't talk about my feelings. A more agreeable subject—I am delighted to see you looking so well. I declare you are younger every year. I can't believe in time, when I look at you. Now the girls of the present day—but I am boring you.'

'O, no, I'm much obliged to you,' said Miss Northcote, who had looked away for a moment from her admirer. 'We lose a great many pretty things, General Hawke, when you shut yourself up at Pensand. I thought the train was coming.'

'Not yet, is it? But I'm getting terribly deaf, so Randal tells me. I am very nervous, too—and, by the bye, I am glad I met you. You and I are old friends, are we not? And you will show a little kindness to a young lady I expect by this train. Quite a stranger to you. She was left in my charge by her father, and has been at a school in London; but now it seems that her education is finished, and Randal represented to me that I ought to have her down here. They say her health is not very good; she is lame, poor girl. Something rather odd about her, I think, though not unprepossessing. I hope you will come up to the Castle and see her.'

'I shall be very glad, indeed,' said Miss Northcote, with the slightest shade of hesitation. 'I am expecting somebody, too, by this train. My nephew Dick, from New Zealand.'

'Dick! Hang the fellow! Back already. That's rather a bad sign.

Why, he only went out the other day. It is the way with all these young fellows; they won't stick to anything.'

'Why, he has been gone ten years. Don't you think he has earned a holiday?'

'Ten years! is it possible? But what's that? I was forty years in India, and never dreamed of coming home. Dick ought to be ashamed of himself.'

'I don't think so,' said Miss Northcote. 'I am afraid he will go back again; but he is coming home to see me. It is my wish, as much as his. I can tell you he will be very welcome.'

'No doubt of it,' said the General, shrugging his shoulders. 'You will do your best to spoil him; you always did. But here they are.'

The train glided slowly across the last piers of the bridge, and round the curve into the station. Miss Northcote moved a few steps away from the General, and stood looking at it as it stopped, and the doors began to open. Her mouth and eyes were smiling, but there was a little doubt in her manner, and she did not hurry forward to meet any one. She was not quite sure about a tall strong young man, with a sunburnt face and a brown beard. Could that be the pale, lanky, delicate Dick, who had been sent out with so much anxiety by his grandparents? He did not look at her, but was quite occupied in helping a fellow-passenger out of the carriage; a girl, who seemed more helpless than the usual run of girls, and had to be almost lifted down from the high step. She was followed by a cross-looking middle-aged woman, flushed and tired from her journey; then a maid approached from another part of the train; then General Hawke moved forward and took

the whole party into his possession.

The young lady stood in the centre of the group, looking very pale and grave. She was a mere slip of a girl, with a small thin brown face, and features too thin and pinched to be pretty. She seemed to have fine dark eyes, but the large eyelids and long black lashes drooped over them only added a little melancholy to her whole appearance.

The young man had not quite done with his fellow-travellers. He took off his hat, looking at General Hawke, who had already given him a curious glance or two.

'Do you remember me, sir?' he said to the old man.

'Are you Dick Northcote? Mind your own affairs, sir. Don't you see your aunt?'

'O!'

He turned away, and the next moment was grasping his aunt's hand. She could hardly feel sure about him yet; it was a pleasant puzzle to find out the old Dick in this completely changed face. The bright dark-blue eyes which smiled at her were the same, however, and after the first minute she felt quite at home.

General Hawke hurried his ward and her belongings away to the carriage, without stopping to introduce her to Miss Northcote, and very soon she and her nephew were walking away up the hill.

CHAPTER II.

DICK.

'I SHOULD be sorry to have such a temper as General Hawke's,' said Dick, looking contentedly round at his aunt, who had established her spoilt boy in the pleasantest place by the prettiest window in her drawing-room. From

his low chair there Dick could look over the green slopes and trees which made the upper sides of the Combe. The Penyr was shut out of sight by a rocky bank opposite, running parallel with that on which the houses were built; but there was a long expanse of the Mora to be seen, glowing with deeper and more brilliant colours as the sunset approached. All the water was alive with ships and boats; old men-of-war laid up, steamers gliding swiftly by: the houses and spires of Morebay on the distant shore shone like gold, and the hills beyond stood out faint and clear against the south-east horizon.

Miss Northcote's long old-fashioned room, with its two south windows, was in shadow. She herself sat away from the window, for she cared more to look at Dick just now than at the view, and he was in the fullest light as he sat with his head thrown back and his arm on the sill, quite in his right place and quite happy. She supposed he was not handsome; he never had been that; his face was too square, his nose was far from being classical. But nobody could help liking the thick brown wavy hair that clustered over his low broad forehead, or those good pleasant eyes of his, or could deny that the beard and the sunbrown and the general manliness of his looks made up for the disappointment that his nose and mouth had formerly been to his friends. Miss Northcote belonged to a handsome family, who therefore thought themselves entitled to be critical, and she was very glad indeed to be able to approve of Dick's appearance, now that he was come back to her. On the whole he was very much altered for the better; his slow heavy manner was partly gone, and he

had been talking in the nicest way about his grandfather and grandmother, who had died within a few months of each other, not long after he went out. There was a pause, and then Dick began about General Hawke's temper.

'Is it so bad?' said Miss Northcote.

'Horrid, I'm sure. A regular old Turk. Never mind: you shall go and call there with me, for that poor girl's sake. I promised her that you would. He might have behaved rather differently, after ten years. However, I forgive him.'

'Explain to me about the girl,' said Miss Northcote. 'Did you make friends with her in the train? She looked wretched, poor thing. Who was that formidable person with her?'

'A governess from the school. She is going back almost directly—a good riddance. Well, we all got in at Paddington. I jumped in at the last moment, and she looked daggers at me; she thought they were going to have the carriage to themselves. I thought the girl seemed very unhappy, so of course I did what civil things I could, without pushing. The governess kept awake as long as she could; but it was very hot, and at last she dropped off, and after we left Bristol the girl and I talked a great deal, at intervals. We found out that we were going to the same place, and she was charmed to find how well I knew Pensand Castle, and all the places and people about here. She has been at school all this time—horribly strict—and she thinks being at General Hawke's may be better than that, though she does not like him at all. I am so sorry for her,' said Dick, in the heartiest manner. 'She is a little lame—perhaps you noticed it—and her hands have no flesh on them at

all, and you saw how pale and sallow and skinny her face was, with those big speaking eyes that somehow make one's heart ache with their sadness.'

Miss Northcote felt as if she hardly knew her nephew well enough to laugh at him, so she controlled her amusement, and said sympathisingly,

'Poor thing! how very sad?'

'So I thought,' said Dick. 'I tried to comfort her, you know. I told her the General was sure to be good to her, and I talked to her about you. I told her you were an angel, aunt Kate, so you must keep up the character. You'll go and see her, won't you? Never mind the General.'

'But the General himself invited me,' said Miss Northcote, smiling. 'So I think I should have gone, even if you had not been in the question at all.'

'O, very well, that's all right. If you take her in hand, I shall not mind so much. Poor little thing!' said Dick thoughtfully. 'She is so young, and so weak, one can't help pitying her.'

'How old is she? Did she tell you?'

'No. Fifteen or sixteen, I suppose.'

'Nineteen at least, I should say.'

'You don't mean it! Why, Mrs. Herbert, my partner's wife, is only one-and-twenty, and she certainly looks ten years older than Miss Ashley. Nineteen! Is it possible?'

'Of course I have no more means of knowing than you have. You found out her name, it seems.'

'I heard it,' said Dick.

There was a pause, during which he stared out of the window, and Miss Northcote watched him as she sat with some work in her hands. If she had been fond of moralising, she would have said

that this relationship of aunt and nephew was a very pleasant one. She and Dick had always been friends, always been quite at home together: she had helped him out of his scrapes, entered into his pleasures, laughed him out of any nonsense that came into his young head, and tried conscientiously to direct his tastes. But Dick had not been quite satisfactory. He was a charming boy at home, but a terrible one at school—idle, lazy, and mischievous to a degree. He had left school at eighteen, without a good word from his master, and had spent a year at home at St. Denys. There he made several undesirable acquaintances, particularly one family with a young lady in it, who caused so much anxiety to his relations that they decided on sending him out to an old friend who had a farm in New Zealand. There Dick had quite retrieved his character; the life suited him, and the accounts of him that reached home were better and better each year. The obnoxious girl had long since married; and though her husband was dead, and she was living again with her father at St. Denys, Dick's aunt did not feel much anxiety; she thought he had quite forgotten her. At any rate, no second thoughts seemed to be troubling Dick's brain that evening, as he sat and looked out over the calm blue waters of the Mora.

'I call this peace,' he said presently. 'Here, you know, one could read poetry. I used to read lots when I was at home that year—do you remember? Tennyson—I thought there was nobody like him. Afterwards, at Auckland, I thought he was all stuff—but since I have been with the Herberts I begin to understand him. Herbert says it is just his perfection that makes it difficult to appreciate him. Do you see? One

takes more fancy to things that are rugged, and have ups and downs and faults in them: but his things are splendidly cut like a gem, every word in its right place, the thoughts and the words just belonging to each other, and not too much of either. O, he's magnificent. I used to read him down in the Combe, and now I mean to do it again.'

'But not to meet Flora Lancaster there, I trust,' thought Miss Northcote, remembering those twilight appointments with a pang, as if they were yesterday, and the late half-hours she used to spend at that very window, listening for his slow reluctant steps coming up over the stones.

'There are plenty of old friends hoping to see you,' she said. 'You must go over to Carweston one of these days. Mrs. Strange was so glad to hear that you were coming.'

'To be sure. Very good of her. Is Anthony Strange as mad as ever?'

'Yes, and as nice as ever.'

'Ah, aunt Kate, he was always a flame of yours. What a fool he has been!' said Dick, smiling.

Here their talk was interrupted by a message from an old sick man in the village: he was taken worse, and would Miss Northcote come down and see him? The sun had set, and the soft lovely twilight was stealing over everything, when she and Dick left the house together.

'You don't often walk about by yourself after sunset, I suppose?' said Dick.

'Now and then. Are you come home to keep me in order? You will find it a hard task, Dick. I am so used to liberty now; and you must remember that every creature in the place knows me.'

'But when I was young,' said Dick, 'there were often ragamuf-

fins from Morebay hanging about here. And I remember that you used to object very much to *my* being out after dark.'

'That was quite a different thing. You were sixteen, and I'm sixty.'

'A very well-preserved old woman,' said Dick, laughing. 'Take my arm, ma'am. You will certainly trip on these stones.'

Old Fenner lived half-way down one of the lanes, a steep winding one, partly overarched by trees. He and his granddaughter inhabited two small low rooms at the top of an old house that was let in flats.

Miss Northcote turned in at the open door, and mounted the broad, clean, uneven stairs, leaving her nephew outside. He lighted a cigar and walked up and down. It was so pleasant to breathe native air again, to see the purple shadows advancing and the lights beginning to flash out on the old river, to hear the familiar accent of the people as they talked in the streets down below, that it never occurred to him to be bored by his aunt's charitable doings. Aunt Kate was always running after the poor people. She spoilt them, of course, but that had never mattered to Dick, as long as she continued to spoil him. And now, with his older ideas, he was inclined to think that she was quite right. They were very much to be pitied, though certainly not for living in St. Denys, which to him was still the prettiest and most homelike place in the world. How jolly it used to be in those old times, when all the boatmen were his friends, and he knew the rivers as well as any of them!

'I'll pull aunt Kate round to Pensand to-morrow,' Dick decided. 'The tide will be right in the afternoon.'

He had strolled some yards up

the lane, as far as the shadow of the trees. As he turned to come back, advancing slowly into the clearer light, a lady, who was climbing the hill with some fatigue and trouble, stopped short as she passed him.

'Dick! Mr. Northcote—I don't think I am mistaken.'

'O, Miss Cardew!' said Dick, quite taken by surprise, and beginning to blush, hardened old traveller as he was.

'Mrs. Lancaster, please,' she said gently.

'Yes; I beg your pardon. I heard, of course, but I forgot for the moment,' said Dick, taking her hand, and squeezing it with quite sufficient emphasis.

It was a very pretty face that was looking up at him in the twilight, fair, with soft blue eyes, and the red-gold hair that the old painters loved—the face of Dick's first love, for whom he had dared his grandfather's anger and his aunt's alternate laughing and remonstrance. She had been everything to him for a few months then—all the heroines of romance rolled into one; and she, a clever ambitious girl, four or five years older than himself, whose relations were nobodies, had seriously thought of marrying him, simply because he was a gentleman. Aunt Kate, by some wise strategy of hers, had prevented any sentimental parting, at which Dick might have sworn eternal constancy; and Flora Cardew had soon after consoled herself with one of the curates. They went away at once from St. Denys, and report said it was not a happy marriage. Anyhow, the curate died within a few years, and Flora, having quarrelled with his relations, came back to her own. She now lived quietly at home, and was kind to her old father and mother. No one in St. Denys

liked her, and yet no one had much to say against her; perhaps, as she herself calmly remarked, it was jealousy. One attraction in Flora was, however, that she never seemed conscious of her own beauty. Her eyes, as they looked up curiously, gently, almost tenderly into Dick's face, were not asking for any admiration. They only said, 'How we are both changed! but you, my old friend, are very much improved, and I should hardly have known you.'

All the confusion was on Dick's side. In the moment of dead silence, as they stood there looking at each other, he caught himself wishing several bad things about Mrs. Lancaster. Did she suppose he was the same fool that went away ten years ago? Then he repented a little, collected himself, and hoped she was quite well. Mrs. Lancaster sighed.

'Not very well, thanks. I see you think I am sadly altered. We can't be young for ever. I dare say I look like a ghost to-night; but I have been shopping at Morebay all day long, and this hill is such a drag when one comes home tired.'

A great pity for weak things was one of the strong points in Dick's imperfect character. He looked down, saw that she was carrying a basket and a large parcel, and took them out of her hands at once, quite with the authority of an old friend.

'O, never mind—thank you,' said Mrs. Lancaster faintly.

'How can you attempt to carry such a load up this hill?' said Dick.

'There was nobody else. Our little maid was too busy to come down and meet me. But I can't let you do it. You are waiting for your aunt; and you only came to-day.'

'My aunt is safe for ten minutes at least. Yes, I got here

this evening. Did you come up by the boat?'

'I did. It was so lovely on the water. I was thinking of you as I came up, because I had heard you were expected. Do you remember frightening me so terribly one night?'

'What, by dropping into the water down at Morebay—awkward ass!' said Dick, with a slight laugh. 'But you were not frightened; you laughed at me.'

'O, but indeed I was. I wonder now you were not drowned, or did not strike your head against something. I have been nervous at stepping on board ever since. Frightened! how little you knew!'

'Well, it might have been a bad affair, as I was out without leave. However, as no harm came of it, suppose we forget it. Except Mrs. Cardew's kindness in drying me so thoroughly before she sent me home. What a plague I must have been! How are Captain and Mrs. Cardew?'

'They are very well. They will be glad to hear that you have not forgotten them.'

'One does not forget old friends so easily.'

'Don't you think so? Then I hope you will prove it by coming to see us.'

'I shall be most happy,' said Dick, now quite secure of having conquered himself, and placed his old acquaintance on a thoroughly unsentimental footing.

Mrs. Lancaster's behaviour was as good as could be expected from a born flirt, and a good deal of Dick's security was based on being pretty well able to meet her on her own ground. He had it in him to become one of those idle wasters of the best thing in this world, and probably might have done so had he stayed in England; but the truth and freedom of his colonial life had both hardened

and softened his heart in the right way; and I think one may say for Dick, at this time, that he only flirted with flirts.

When she had got the promise of a visit, Flora became much more cheerful, and discreetly avoiding old times, asked many intelligent questions about New Zealand and his doings there.

They turned to the right, still strolling slowly up the hill, and stopped at the iron gate of a little square garden. Here Dick gave up the parcels; but after he had opened the gate and shut it again with the old familiar catch, there were still a few last words to be said, and he stood leaning with his elbows on the top bar, the stars coming out over his head, the air full of roses and jessamine, till one would certainly have fancied that those ten years had vanished like a dream. At last came the final good-night, with a very cordial shake of the hand; and Dick, remembering his aunt, walked off in a great hurry.

'As silly as ever, but very nice,' was Mrs. Lancaster's verdict, as she went into the house.

Miss Northcote had come downstairs, and was standing on the doorstep with Polly Fenner, the old man's granddaughter, looking up and down the lane for Dick. Polly, a rosy girl of eighteen, thought it great fun, and proposed setting off to hunt for him.

'He'll be tired of waiting, and gone home,' she suggested. 'I'll be proud to walk up with you, ma'am.'

'No, Polly, thank you. Here he is, I think.'

Dick came striding down the hill with the haste of a bad conscience.

'I hope you have not been waiting long,' he said politely.

'O, no. Good-night,' Polly;

and Miss Northcote stepped down into the road and took his offered arm.

'It was good of you to hurry back,' she said, as they walked away. 'Were you visiting some of your old haunts?'

'No; not exactly. I met an old friend, and walked home with her. Flora Cardew: odd, wasn't it?'

'Mrs. Lancaster.'

'Hang Lancaster! I beg his pardon, poor fellow. I forgot he was dead,' Dick added penitently. 'But I am always forgetting his existence. I never saw him, you know. He came the very day I sailed.'

'Yes, I believe he did,' said Miss Northcote.

She would not either laugh or remonstrate now. Dick was his own master, and if he chose to be so terribly foolish, there was no help for it. Any remark might only make things worse. But her heart sank very sadly as she walked up the hill, leaning on her nephew's strong arm. She need not have hoped that Mrs. Lancaster would lose the opportunity;—still she might have waited a few days, Miss Northcote thought, before she pounced upon him. The very first evening—it was almost too hard. Aunts, if they are unmarried, ought to be the least selfish of human beings; and to do Kate Northcote justice, though Dick was the only relation she had left, she would have given him up without a moment's thought of her own loss to any one she felt to be worthy of him. But not to Flora Lancaster!

Though his aunt said nothing, Dick understood that the subject was not a welcome one. He thought she need not be afraid, but did not tell her so. He began to talk rather eagerly about

his plan for pulling up the Penyr to Pensand Combe, and then went back to his companion in the train. He felt sure she could not be more than sixteen.

'Well, you may be right, Dick,' said Miss Northcote. 'I have not talked to her. But I did not think it such a very young face.'

'But she had none of the ways of a grown-up person. She was just like a schoolgirl. I wonder how she will get on at Pensand. I suspect the life there will be dreadful to her, for she told me she cared for nothing so much as being free. And General Hawke makes everybody in his house go on by clockwork. Randal used to tell me so. He never could bear it. By the bye, where is Randal?'

'In London, I think,' said Miss Northcote. 'He is here sometimes. He grows more like the General in some things, but he never will be so good-looking.'

'What a brute he was!' said Dick reflectively.

'Was he, Dick? We always look upon him as a respectable character.'

'Do you? Well, he may be respectable now. But I used to hear things about him in the village that I never told you. I'm not going to rake them up now, so peace be with him. You will go to-morrow afternoon, aunt Kate? We ought to start at half-past three.'

'Yes; I should like to go very much. You used to be a good boatman.'

'That's settled, then.'

CHAPTER III.

PENSAND CASTLE.

It says something for the beauty of St. Denys that Mabel Ashley

forgot all her troubles, her shyness, and her dislike of General Hawke, and exclaimed enthusiastically several times as they drove from the station.

From the top of the hill there was the view of the broad Mora with its varied banks, and the background of blue and purple hills. Then there were the lanes going down and down, twisting round in strange curves, ferns drooping from their high rocky banks, among a tender embroidery of red wild geranium leaves, and blue and purple and yellow flowers bending forward on their slight stems, while the hedges up above were bright with wild roses and honeysuckle, roses of so deep a pink that they looked to Mabel's uneducated eyes like some rarity of the garden.

The General smiled at her exclamations; he was not otherwise than pleased to see his ward's grave eyes light up, and a faint flush of colour come into her sallow cheeks. The drive was too short; hardly two miles from the station, and they were at the foot of the last hill, in Pensand Combe. Here the small old cottages, some whitewashed, others rough gray stone, nestled each in its corner under the hill, surrounded and overgrown with flowers. They were everywhere, from the gay stonecrop on the walls and roof to the great red fuchsia overhanging the gate. By an old stone bridge of several arches, the carriage crossed the head of a little salt-water creek, from which the tide was now going down, leaving a bed of mud and stones and blackened logs, among which some amphibious-looking children were playing.

They turned up a lane, past a gray old mill, whose wheel was now silent, and began at once to mount up under the deep shade

of trees, till they came to a lodge and gate, and entered an avenue which seemed to skirt the hill.

Nearly all through the drive, looking out of the window, Mabel had seen this hill in front of them, covered with trees to the summit, where a row of gray battlements looked out above their heads. Now, as the carriage wound slowly up the hill, in the deep mysterious shade of the oak and chestnut woods, with great ferns growing about their feet, and hanging over the edges of the road, with here and there, as they went up, a glimpse of a glade full of roses, and then the crumbling old wall of a garden on the slope, where there were peeps of raspberry and currant bushes, and a scent of strawberries in the air, Mabel began to think that all this was rather pleasant, that it might not be so bad, after all, to live in such a romantic old place and such a smiling country.

She had been silent for some time, but now she looked up at the General with a little more confidence, and asked,

‘Is this Pensand?’

‘This is Pensand,’ said the General graciously. ‘A lonely spot, you see.’

‘It is beautiful,’ said Mabel. ‘The gentleman who was in the carriage with us told me it was built by the ancient Britons.’

‘Impossible! The aborigines lived in caves,’ said Mabel’s schoolmistress, who had been keeping up a conversation with the General while her charge looked about, and trying to hide her terror at the steepness of the hills.

‘The early Cornish castles were without doubt of British origin,’ said the General, stroking his moustache. ‘But I myself know nothing about it, and should like the place just as well without its ruins. If you are fond of antiqui-

ties,’ he went on, looking at Mabel, ‘I must introduce a neighbour of mine to you, who is really learned in those subjects. Pensand is the idol he worships, so you can study it together. But as to my friend Dick Northcote, I would not advise you to put much faith in him.’

‘I know nothing at all about antiquities,’ said Mabel, colouring slightly.

‘Dick had the honour of escorting you all the way, then?’ General Hawke went on.

‘From Paddington,’ said the elder lady, with some irritation in her tone. ‘It was a great vexation to me, but what could I do? I must say that he and Miss Ashley made a little more acquaintance than was necessary, under the circumstances. I thought him a rather forward young man.’

‘Well, we must not be hard on young people,’ said the General, looking at Mabel with a smile, which made her blush a good deal more. ‘Not on young ladies, at least. They never mean to do wrong themselves, and so of course never suspect any one else. But young men are generally rascals, and we can’t be too severe on them. Dick is a forward fellow, I have no doubt. He has been roughing it in New Zealand, too, and knows nothing of the ways of society. Yes. His aunt is a charming person, and I hoped you would see a good deal of her. But I don’t know, now that Dick has made his appearance. I have not much confidence in him.’

The General smiled so kindly as he said this, looking at Mabel all the time, that her fear of him melted away fast, and she began to feel quite happy and natural. He evidently understood her so much better than Miss Wrench, who sat there frowning, as if her

pupil had committed some deadly sin in talking to a pleasant fellow-traveller.

'I thought he was very polite and nice, and not at all forward,' she said, looking bravely up at the General.

'My dear, your ignorance—' began Miss Wrench; but the General made her a little bow, which seemed gently and courteously to remind her that he ought to be heard first, in right of his white hairs.

'It was very natural that you should like him, Mabel,' he said, with frank paternal kindness, and yet a shade of gravity. 'He always was a pleasant fellow to talk to. I like him myself. But before he went out to New Zealand he was not at all a good boy; and I must be convinced that he has changed very much before I can encourage him here. That is all I have to say about him.'

Miss Wrench nodded approval. Mabel looked rather downcast, but recovered herself immediately, and forgot Dick, in the delight of going under the archway of an old gate-tower nearly covered with ivy. A little way off, high up on a mound of its own, at the very top of the hill, the ruined keep of the castle frowned down upon them, over a wilderness of roses and flowering shrubs, through which a minute more brought them to the door of a long, low, quaint house, not to be seen from beneath.

The carriage stopped; General Hawke got out nimbly, and helped the ladies out, with a pressure of Mabel's hand and a 'Welcome to Pensand.'

There was a stiff old-fashioned dignity about the house and its furniture, which seemed to show that it was a long time since a lady had ruled there. Still, the drawing-room, into which they went

through the hall and library, had an air of comfort, partly owing to the number of large armchairs with ancient chintz covers and cushions. General Hawke put his ward into one of these, and stood looking at her with a complacent smile. Here she was, quite safe, and very small and odd she looked among all the large pieces of furniture, the great heavy tables and cabinets, the dark stately portraits of soldiers and statesmen who gazed at her from the walls. Mabel gave one glance round, and was not attracted by any of them. The next moment her eyes and thoughts were gone out of the window, where the evening sun was shining across the lawn, on the gray terrace wall that bounded it, the scarlet geraniums, the roses, and beyond them a blue gleam very far away, suggesting all sorts of loveliness to be seen from the lawn itself. She appealed to the General, more by look than words, might she go out?

'Better not now, I think,' said he. 'You are tired. The house-keeper shall show you your rooms. Dinner will be ready in three-quarters of an hour. And please remember that I am a punctual man.'

'Ah! don't forget that, my dear,' said Miss Wrench, shaking her head at Mabel, who looked vexed, but made no answer. The General's smile reassured her again, and sent her up-stairs tolerably cheerful.

She did not like her room much; it looked out to the side, over the shrubberies, and towards the keep, which was itself hidden by trees. As soon as she was ready she made her way down-stairs again, not without a little difficulty among various narrow passages and small flights of steps.

A gray-haired butler looked out of the dining-room, and saw her coming down the slippery oak staircase slowly and unevenly. He came forward and opened the library door, with a bow to the little lady, and she passed on between the sober-looking bookcases into the drawing-room, and stood at the open window with her hands clasped, looking out across the lawn.

She was a very small girl, and in her long black evening dress she looked still smaller. As she stood still, it was a pretty graceful little figure, and there was a certain distinction about the small head, the large peculiar eyes, and the bright dark hair which seemed inclined to curl in tiny rings, and was brushed back and kept in order with difficulty. But no one could admire the pinched pained look in her face, and all the grace of her figure vanished when she moved. She herself seemed to suffer so acutely from the awkwardness of being lame, that those about her felt and noticed it all the more.

Presently, as nobody came, she turned away from the window, and made a slow pilgrimage round the room. The cabinets were full of handsome old china and Indian curiosities, at which she peeped in for a moment, but saw nothing that interested her much. At the further end a door was standing half open, and Mabel looked into a small room, with another door into the hall, which was shut. The evening sun made his way into this room round some corner, and it was full of low yellow light, making it all the brighter in contrast with the larger room beyond. This might have belonged to a lady; there were little tables and low chairs and looking-glasses, some pretty water-colours on the walls, modern

china and books, flowers here and there.

Mabel advanced a step or two, and thought it the prettiest little room she had ever seen. She wondered if the General would let her spend her time here. There was a photograph-book lying unclasped on a table near the door, and she opened it at the first page, on which there were two portraits. One was of a dark young-looking man, whose expression was anything but pleasant, though his features were handsome. Mabel turned her eyes away from him. But the other she thought charming. It was of a lady, very much dressed, with frills and necklaces and bracelets. She was leaning her head on her hand, her lace sleeve falling back from a very pretty arm. Perhaps people more experienced in faces than Mabel might not have felt quite sure about this one, attractive as it was. But she admired it thoroughly, and thought it a sweet face, frank and pleasant and almost beautiful. The lady was looking full at her with a slight smile, and yet a great deal of earnestness. Her hair was cut across her forehead, a fashion which Mabel admired, having never been allowed to adopt it herself. She stood bending over the photograph till General Hawke came along the drawing-room and joined her, having caught a glimpse of her gown through the door.

'You are quite right: this room is more cheerful than the other,' he said. 'And what have you got there?'

Mabel held up the book.

'I don't know who they are,' she said; 'but how pretty she is!'

'Ah!' said the General, putting up his eyeglass. 'That is my son, and a very funny fellow he

is. Not by any means the kill-joy he looks there. As to the lady—I don't know what brings her into that prominent place. She lives at St. Denys. And that is not a faithful portrait of her either. I never saw her look so happy, or so well dressed—poor thing!

'Is she poor—really poor, I mean?' asked Mabel, with eager sympathy.

'No—her people ought to be pretty well off. But her life has not been altogether a lucky one. She is a widow, and her marriage was not happy. Dick Northcote—well, he ought to have come back and married her. She was half engaged to him before he went out. But perhaps she thought herself well rid of him, for I believe two or three other young ladies could have preferred the same claim.'

Mabel looked up horrified; she could hardly believe him.

'The world is not so good as you think it, I am afraid,' said the General, smiling. 'If Mrs. Lancaster ever had your illusions, she has lost them long ago. I forget what your exact age is,' he went on, after a moment's pause.

'I am nearly nineteen.'

'That is a charming age. Well, now, before your good governess comes down, I want to ask you one or two things. Do you think you will be able to make yourself happy here at Pensand, with me?'

The General was a handsome old man, and pleasant-looking too, when he chose; his eyes were still bright, and his manners left nothing to be desired. Certain frowning lines in his forehead might have warned a physiognomist to doubt his temper, but at present these were smoothed away. Mabel looked at him, withdrew the last remains of her

prejudice, and answered, after a moment's hesitation:

'Yes; if you really like to have me.'

'That's right,' said the General. 'I am glad to hear you say so.'

He took a chair close to the table where Mabel was standing with the photograph-book, and held out his hand to her. She put hers into it; he held it, and looked at it curiously.

'London air makes people thin,' he said. 'Now you must grow fat, and treat me as your grandfather; those are my two wishes. Another thing I had to suggest. Can we do without Miss Wrench, or a counterpart of her? You don't want to learn any lessons at nineteen. And however one may respect a person of that kind, she becomes a *gêne*—a bore, in fact. But you may be lonely?'

Mabel shook her head emphatically.

'I have been at school so long,' she said, 'I shall be only too glad to be free.'

The General glanced at her rather oddly: he was wondering, perhaps, what this helpless creature meant by freedom, and what she would do with it if she had it.

'Hush, there she is,' he whispered, as Miss Wrench came with a stiff rustle into the other room.

When dinner was over, and the ladies had come back into the drawing-room, Mabel left her companion resting in an armchair, and walked off across the lawn to enjoy the view by herself.

High above the rocky banks and cliffs clothed with wood, she looked down on them over the tops of the Castle trees, which quite shut out the Combe at her feet. St. Denys was hidden by the high ground, but following the Penyr as it spread away to her left, she saw the meet-

ing of the two great streams, and then their course together down to the sea. The water gleamed silver in the twilight, and the woods were dark and solemn; the distance was full of the flashing lights of the ships and of Morebay. Overhead the sky was blue and deep, with stars shining, and a faint yellow glow in the west. It would be no darker than this all night long.

Mabel stood quite still, a small black figure in the foreground of the view. She was listening, but there was nothing to be heard, except the bark of a dog now and then in the Combe, and the plashing of oars, as some late boatman rowed home down the Penyr. The flowers had it all their own way now, and the air was filled with the sweet scents that it pleased them to send out into the night. A magnolia, climbing up outside the wall, pushed its strong leaves and great white flowers within two yards of where the girl stood, and breathed its sweetness into her face. No doubt they all had a great deal to say to Mabel, if she had understood them, but at present she was hardly aware that she wanted any sympathy. It was nothing new to her to be alone. She did not remember her mother. Her father had spent his life in India, and died there two years ago; she had not seen him since she was a child.

Her shy odd nature, too proud to ask for affection, easily prejudiced, contemptuous of the small ways she saw about her in the London school where she had spent nearly all her life, yet only too sensitive and grateful for kindness, was not that of a very happy person. Herschoolfellows laughed at her; her mistresses were old-fashioned people, whose chief idea was discipline, which Mabel did not like. None of them ever en-

couraged her confidence, or tried to draw her out, so it happened that the years went on, and she made no friends. Yet she never thought herself unhappy, and underneath her melancholy appearance there was a spring of enthusiasm, of girlish fun, even of adventurousness, which, till now, had hardly found its way out, except into dreams.

Dick Northcote in the railway carriage had soon discovered it. I believe, though it may seem almost incredible, he was the first young man Mabel had ever talked to. The variety was so great that it quite took her out of herself, the more that he was thoroughly good-natured and natural, and had a real feeling of kindness and pity for the forlorn schoolgirl. Mabel was sorry to find that she was not to like him or think about him, after all. She never thought for a moment of doubting what the General had said.

While she stood there on the lawn, her guardian came into the drawing-room, and finding Miss Wrench there alone, began to talk to her about her pupil, and to tell her his plans for the future. Miss Wrench was just, though severe. She admitted that Mabel had many good qualities, that she was truthful, honourable, and thoroughly ladylike in mind. But she thought her a troublesome girl, and said so. She was careless of rules, proud, obstinate, and at times passionate. She required a strict hand over her, Miss Wrench said, and she was afraid that General Hawke would not find it answer to free her from all supervision.

The General smiled quietly to himself.

'There is one difference between your view of Mabel and mine,' he said. 'You look upon her as a child; I, as a woman. She is a

woman—though I can't wonder at your forgetting it; nothing more natural. She is beyond being fastened down by rules; she is old enough to guide her life for herself. Or, if there is guidance, it must be invisible; she must be unconscious of it. My idea is, that she and I will do best alone together.'

Miss Wrench shook her head. 'You may be right,' she said. 'I hope you are. But awkwardnesses will arise, I am very much afraid. Mabel ought to be grown up, of course, at nineteen. But she has the mind of a child.'

'But she has been in your charge for some years,' said the General very gently. 'You have had the forming of her mind. You did not imagine that she was to stay at school till five-and-twenty?'

'No,' said Miss Wrench, colouring slightly. 'But with our establishment of young people—I really do not know what more we could have done. It is impossible to devote ourselves entirely to one; it would be unjust to the others. Girls must do a good deal for themselves. Under the present circumstances, I daresay Mabel may develop more quickly.'

'Just now she is running a great risk of rheumatism,' said the General, and Mabel's twilight dream was broken in upon by her guardian's voice, calling across the lawn.

fore, was to get up, and made her way down-stairs before eight, to the surprise and terror of a housemaid who was dusting the drawing-room. Mabel had no feeling of responsibility to Miss Wrench, or any one, except the General, who had told her last night that she was to be mistress of the house, and to pour out his coffee. She saw no reason why she should not explore the place before breakfast, and set forth at once from the drawing-room window.

If Pensand Castle was lovely in the evening, it was still more so in the morning, with the sun shining brilliantly over all that landscape of waving wood and dancing water. A breeze had sprung up in the night, and was driving a few white clouds across the sky; they threw soft shadows on the rivers as they floated along. The water seemed to be alive with movement; another ship had come up and anchored at the mouth of the Penyr; far away, beyond wooded points and ships and buildings, there was the deep-blue dazzling line of the sea.

As Mabel walked through the garden, the roses shook their petals at her feet; the birds sang and hopped across her path. It was not long before she got out of sight of the house, and then she soon lost her way, down among little grassy glens full of roses, with small paths leading in all directions. She gathered one or two rosebuds, and carrying them in her hand went on, not much caring where, presently coming out of one of these rose-preserves into a grove of oaks bedded in fern, and going on slowly through it to a little gate opening out on a steep green field. There the sun was shining in all his strength. She looked back into the chequered shade through which she had been travelling, then out again

CHAPTER IV.

ANTHONY.

GENERAL HAWKE'S breakfast-time was ten. But Mabel passed a restless night and woke early, with the strangest new feeling of being able to do as she liked. The first thing she did, there-

into the field, with the first shade of doubt in her mind : ought she to go any further? But it was scarcely more than half-past eight, and the attraction of the sunshine was too strong; she felt like a flower that had been brought up in a dark place, and longed to bask in it. So she went into the field. It was itself a lower part of the Castle mound, stretching away to the south. It sloped down in natural terraces to a rough pathway and a line of oaks, and then broke away into cliffs draped with ivy and bushes. To the cliff's foot sloped up the sands of the tidal creek.

Mabel had not gone very far along the field—for her progress was always slow—when a large black dog came rushing up, and sprang upon her so roughly as almost to knock her down. She gave a little scream, and a tall man instantly appeared, striding up the hill with long quick steps. He was an odd-looking, smooth-faced person, in spectacles, perhaps about forty. As he came up, looking flushed and excited, Mabel forgot her fright, and felt inclined to laugh.

'Down, Prince!' cried the stranger. 'I hope my dog has not hurt you.'

He took off his hat and stood still, with an air of the deepest anxiety, looking hard at Mabel through his spectacles.

'Not at all, thank you; he only frightened me. I was silly,' said she; and then she thought she had better turn back to the garden, for the earnest gaze of her new acquaintance was almost embarrassing.

'Now don't let me and my dog spoil your walk,' he exclaimed. 'We shall never forgive ourselves. Come to the other end of this field, and let me show you the prettiest view of the Castle. You have

plenty of time. The General does not breakfast till ten, I know. Shocking, that an old soldier should be so lazy!'

Mabel regarded him with grave astonishment.

'Thank you; I think I must go back now,' she said, and with a slight bow she was turning away.

But the stranger was not so easily got rid of, and began to walk on by her side.

Mabel did not know what to do. He had the voice and appearance of a gentleman; but who could he be, and what could his behaviour mean? He, meanwhile, seeing her limp, suddenly offered her his arm, saying that the field was too rough for her. This was enough; Mabel stopped, and once more looked him gravely in the face.

'I don't know who you are,' she said, 'and I cannot think how you know me. I wish I had never come out of the garden. I would much rather go back by myself, please.'

Her new acquaintance smiled very amiably.

'Go back by yourself! Why? Because we have not been introduced to each other! I thought of asking the General to let me breakfast with him, as he is so lazy; but if you don't like me I will go home.'

'O, I beg your pardon; I did not know you were a friend of the General's,' said Mabel, much confused. 'He will be very glad to see you, I daresay.'

'About that I have no doubt. I believe I have the honour of speaking to Miss Ashley,' taking off his hat again. 'I, your unfortunate servant, am Anthony Strange, of Carweston. Now this is dreadful; you never heard of me before?'

Mabel shook her head. 'But how did you know it was me?' she said.

'Because I have been expecting you to dawn upon us; and there is no other young lady nearer than St. Denys; and none of them would be walking in Pensand Combe at this hour. Have I satisfied you, and will you forgive me?'

'Yes,' said Mabel, beginning to smile.

'Are you tired?'

'No, I am lame, but I can walk very well,' said Mabel, in a low voice, with the strangest feeling that she had known this man all her life, and was quite sure from experience what he would say next.

'Do, then, trust yourself to me and Prince along this field and into the lane at the other end. There are such roses in the hedge—red, red—"newly sprung in June." I am not talking nonsense. They *are* red.'

'Yes, I believe it,' said Mabel. 'I saw them yesterday as we came from the station.'

'Not these. These are the reddest in the country. And there is an old mill, a much older and prettier one than you have seen. We won't go as far as that now, though; for it is low tide, as you see, and the dear old wheels will be resting themselves. Now you know who I am you really must take my arm. There is no harm in me; I am a clergyman.'

Mabel laughed and took his arm, though unwillingly; but she found it a very firm and pleasant support to her weak little steps. Anthony was silent for a minute or two, and an idea flashed into her mind.

'Is it you who are so fond of Pensand Castle, and of antiquities?'

'I spend my whole life in the past. When did my fame reach you? I am a real antiquary—not one of your archæological fellows,

who write papers for societies that never read them. I never wrote a line in my life. How did you hear of me?'

'General Hawke mentioned you last night. He said you could tell me when the Castle was built, and all about it.'

'He gave me credit for a good deal,' said Mr. Strange thoughtfully. 'I have my theories, certainly. I'll explain them to you after breakfast. We must visit the keep together.'

'Was it the ancient Britons?'

'Who put that into your head? Nobody believes it but me. I say that Pensand was one of King Arthur's strongholds.'

'But was King Arthur a real person?' said Mabel doubtfully, remembering her lessons in English history.

'My dear young friend! Was Queen Elizabeth a real person? But how did you happen to hit on Celtic builders of the Castle?'

'That is a long story,' said Mabel.

'Then it will just last till we reach the roses.'

'Well, I travelled down yesterday with Mr. Northcote, whose aunt lives at St. Denys. We talked about the Castle, and he told me that,' said Mabel, her long story melting into air.

'Good boy, to remember my early lessons. Well, what has New Zealand done for him?'

'I don't know,' said Mabel.

'Of course you don't. I forgot he was a stranger to you. Poor Dick! if good influences will do anything, he ought to be a fine fellow. A sweeter woman than Kate Northcote never breathed Cornish air.'

'Do you mean his aunt? He told me she was an angel.'

'So she is—and something better than an angel.'

Mabel wondered what that

might be, but did not ask. Mr. Strange's kind regretful manner in speaking of Dick seemed to her a confirmation of what the General had said. It was sad that any one who was good-natured should be so very odious.

By the time that, after long roundabout wanderings, they got back to the Castle, Mabel and Anthony were great friends. After the first, he was like other people in treating her rather as a child, though certainly in nothing else. His kind odd face beamed down upon her, his hand was always ready to help her over any uneven ground. He told her several stories about the Castle and its neighbourhood, and encouraged her questions, and talked away so agreeably that she was quite sorry to find herself at the door. The General and Miss Wrench were waiting, both with grave faces, for it was past ten. Anthony, however, was a welcome guest, and his excuses mollified the General at once. He was pleased, too, to see Mabel's eyes so bright, and a fresh colour in her cheeks.

'If she would walk over every morning to Carweston, to see me,' said Anthony, 'she would be a giantess in six months. As to strength, I mean. Miss Ashley, you would be able to pitch a fellow from the top of the keep, as Lady Janet did to the Puritan, when he told her that the prospect before them was better worth studying than her mirror.'

'The Puritan was right, for once,' said Miss Wrench. 'Was he killed, poor man? I hope she was punished.'

'I sincerely hope not, but history does not say,' answered Mr. Strange. 'Ladies in those days knew how to keep up their dignity. I wish we had some Lady Janets now. Do make her your model,' smiling at Mabel. 'I can

tell you a great many more things about her.'

'Just now, Anthony, be good enough to read prayers,' said the General.

The long line of servants came in, and Mabel remembered, with a sort of shock, that her odd friend was a clergyman. She was aware the next minute that his voice in reading was singularly beautiful; low, musical, and reverent. He seemed to abstract himself suddenly from the things round him, and to pass into a higher region of calm bright air. Not that it seemed in the least an unfamiliar region. Mabel thought afterwards that he always lived in it, and that in the silences which sometimes fell upon him in the midst of his liveliest talk he had simply retired into it for a few minutes of peace. This was a fancy of hers, for most of those who knew him thought him a little mad.

It was a fact, however, that all stiffness, all uneasiness, vanished from Pensand Castle when Anthony was there. Even Miss Wrench laughed and enjoyed herself. Mabel entered into all his jokes, and talked almost as fast as he did. The General watched her with a good deal of amusement; there was a shade of contempt in his liking for Anthony, but he quite understood that women might think him clever and original.

After breakfast they all walked up together to the keep, where Mabel had a lecture on Roman and British building. Anthony poked among the stones, and showed her what rough uneven blocks they were, put together without any sign of mortar or cement. The tower was hollow inside, and they climbed up by a flight of wooden steps to the battlements. Miss Wrench said something about 'that poor Puritan,

and shuddered as she looked down the wall and the steep descent below.

'Yes,' said Anthony; 'he must have rolled and rolled and rolled, smashing the trees on his way, till he tumbled into the water down there, and was fished out by the miller. What a fate! And Lady Janet nearly shared it, she flew down so fast after him—for she had a soft heart of her own, bless her! But the genius of her house caught her in his open arms, and lodged her in an oak. There she sat and wept, till her tears bubbled up in a little spring at the foot of a tree, and flowed down, down, past the mill, in the channel the poor man had scraped for them, till they trickled over into the head of the creek, as they do to this day.'

'Suppose you look at the view, Mabel, that caused all this commotion,' said General Hawke, almost impatient at the way in which she hung on Anthony's words.

It was glorious indeed, that meeting of the waters, dancing and glittering under the midday sun. All the clouds were gone, and the heavy green of the woods, the reddened gold of the grass fields deep in sorrel and buttercups, only made more intense the blue of water and sky, and the glow of sapphire sea that trembled against the horizon.

'He deserved it,' said Anthony, 'if it were only for speaking in face of such a sight as this; certainly for judging a neighbour so much fairer and better than himself.'

WHO IS SHE ?

A Memory of the French Salon.

O FACE, are you only a fancy,
 Enshrined in a gilded frame,
 Or the spell of some necromancy
 That lives here—without a name?
 Your eyes meet my own up-glancing,
 Through width of a splendid room,
 And hold me with wondrous trancing,
 And tire me with hopeless doom.

For I fear that the face before me
 Has never a sister soul,
 And the love that would fain adore thee
 Faints from a far-off goal;
 That it never can reach with longing,
 And never may touch by prayer,
 If I listen to thoughts, swift thronging
 From depths that are half despair.

I have gazed, and am mad with gazing,
At the beautiful lips so dumb ;
On the eyes, with their light amazing,
That dazzle me like a sun ;
On a mouth like a blood-red blossom,
And a cheek with a rose's glow,
And a fleece of hair half tossen
From brow to the shoulder's snow.

O splendour of perfect beauty,
Enshrined in a golden frame,
Were it anything more than duty
To ask for as fair a name ?
And I turn to the crowd around me,
As it heaves like a tossing sea ;
But one and all who surround me
Are murmuring, ' Who is she ?'

O love, with those soft close lashes
Sweeping that pictured cheek,
And a splendour of light that flashes
From eyes that my own eyes seek—
Who are you ? Durst I pray you
To feed me with future bliss,
Wherever your fame array you,
Wherever your lips may kiss ?

In the world of art I have met you,
Where myriad voices praise ;
In another world—to forget you
I pray, through the weary days.
For though you be dead or living,
Your beauty alone I see,
A heart and its worship giving,
While others ask, ' Who is she ?'

RITA.

ON THE ADVANTAGES OF KEEPING A £5 NOTE IN ONE'S POCKET.

IF I were asked what was the index of a peculiarly happy and prosperous state of affairs, I should say that it was the possession of a clear, crisp five-pound note, hid away in the intricacies of the purse, a department of the pocket-book, or a recess of the waistcoat-pocket. A peculiar and even sacred character should attach itself to this blessed fiver. It is to be there, not for a normal, or even extraordinary, expenditure on oneself; but is to be there as a kind of fairy force, to be put forth at times, on critical occasions, and for great uses. I have often noticed that a five-pound note thus used possesses all the constituents of power, comfort, and ability of doing good. It is a five-pound note which you will very speedily change, but only at a special instance. It is a five-pound note which, when once spent, must be replaced as speedily as possible. There is something mystic about the character of this five-pound note. It has an extraordinary faculty of multiplying itself. It seems to shed a halo upon the whole fraternity of bank-notes, from the rumpled, greasy one-pound note of a Scottish bank to some note of tremendous value, if you should ever have the good fortune to possess one, such as Jemmy Wood the miser is reported to have kept framed and glazed in his bank in Westgate-street, Gloucester, now occupied by a branch of the National Provincial.

Let it be remarked that the possession even of this solitary glorified fiver is an outward and visible sign of a very blessed state of things. It assumes that you are without debt and without very pressing cares. You are not so very anxious about this bit of flimsy. The loss of it would not make you sick or sorry, as might be the case with impecunious multitudes of your fellow-creatures. A man may have very large dealings with a bank, and yet not be able to spare this loose fi'-pun' note. He might have dealings with half a dozen banks, and yet not be able to spare it. There was a man in the

Insolvent Court the other day, who said that he had an account at half a dozen banks. When asked what was the use of so many banks, he candidly avowed 'to overdraw them.' Such an individual, though he might have thousands in his banks, might yet be destitute of the blissful bit of paper which I am discussing. He might be extremely solvent pecuniarily, yet utterly insolvent in all those higher principles and generous emotions which would induce a man to specialise and consecrate such a note. My five-pound note argues not only an external but an internal prosperity. It also argues in the good prosperous man a certain amount of plenty and prevision. Suppose you are travelling about—and it is in travelling about that you will often have the best opportunity of dispensing the constituent factors of this blessed fiver—how awkward that you should run short, run short in a country where your name is unknown and your cheques would be unhonoured! You have to change your last five-pound note, and your farewell glance at it, ere it melts away in metal, is as the last glance at the setting sun, the last glance from deck at your receding fatherland. When once it is changed it melts away with incredible velocity. Never change a bank-note until the last moment and at absolute necessity. That man is indeed, in a very high sense, *totus teres atque rotundus*, who can always carry with him this enchanted document. To quote Horace once more, he often realises the *deus ex machina*. He is a kind of good angel upon earth. He is a sort of visible Providence. Moreover, to add to his blessings and accomplishments, he must be learned in the lore of the human countenance and the human heart. He must be able to detect his opportunity and to seize it. In this way you may entertain angels unawares, and obtain the blessing of him who is ready to perish.

You had better not lose much time in exchanging your beatific note. There is a certain kind of good which can only be done by gold; a certain kind of good which can only be done by silver; a certain kind of good which can only be done by copper. In the same way the opportunity arises in which you may spend your five-pound note at one burst, and then, with all convenient speed, you should provide another. Two curates had a conversation one day. The one who was the visitor was lamenting the pressure of some debt, and said that he must write at once to his remorseless creditor. 'If you go to that drawer,' said his friend, 'you will find some letter-paper, and you will also find some *note-paper*, to which you are quite welcome.' On the top of the letter-paper was the five-pound note which exactly met the emergency of the day. At a little inn in the Lake district one day, two tourists who knew each other met. The one was just on the



start, very flush with fivers; the other was returning, and at the very dregs of his last note. As one of them was counting out his roll of notes, he observed a wistful look on the face of the other. 'Would one of these be of any use to you, old man?' he remarked. The offer was gratefully accepted, and he little knew what extraordinary good that note was the means of effecting. The fiver was repaid, and was sent once more

on a rejoicing career of good. Lord Beaconsfield, in one of his earlier novels, makes his 'young Duke' slip three hundred pounds into a widow's basket. It was a munificent action, and I have known such actions sometimes happen in real life, as well as in the pages of fiction. But I solemnly asseverate that I have known a five-pound note do as much as would tax even the Premier's imagination to realise.

But let us not forget the uses of the silver and the copper as well as gold and 'paper.' I am glad that so much attention has been concentrated of late upon dear old Johnson, nearly half a dozen publications having been issued respecting him of late. We contrast his tender nature with his rugged exterior. When he found the little street Arabs asleep on the stony steps of the City he would slip some coppers into their hands, that they might have the wherewithal to provide a breakfast. I met a little boy in a street in the East-end of

London one day nearly breaking his heart with grief and terror because he had upset a pint of beer. In all probability he would have had an awful thrashing when he got home. It was only a few coppers, but perhaps the child was saved a miserable memory, which would have haunted his life. A lad makes an unfortunate tumble, and the contents of the milk-can, with which he has been intrusted, are upon the ground. How the little children, not to mention cats and dogs, come to lick the pavement and the gutter! That small

boy's wage becomes dreadfully mortgaged to his employers: a shilling or two will make all matters square. You are at a railway station, and you find a worthy old body in a state of dreadful bewilderment. She learns that there is no third class to the place where she wishes to go, or that she has not got enough money even for a third. Perhaps

she wants to go to a bedridden sister or a dying child. You bethink yourself of the little reserve fund at your command. The old lady's difficulties all vanish away in smiles and tears. I know a noble lord who is as liberal as the day, but very negligent in the way of providing himself with small change. Like Addison, he could write a cheque for a thousand pounds, but might be at a loss for ninepence. He arrived at a metropolitan station for the purpose of going down the line to attend a wedding, and found himself penniless. He found his way among the clerks, and tried to effect an arrangement about a return ticket. 'I don't know if you're a lord,' said a young fellow, 'but you look an honest man, and I will lend you a five-pound note if you like.' I have no doubt that fiver, cousin-german to the fiver I am describing, blossomed into something better.

A small handful of silver will often do a whole armful of good. You live, say, in a country place, and you know something, directly or indirectly, of the cottagers and their families. Here is a poor girl who has had typhus fever, and is slowly recovering. She has relations who will give her the enjoyment of the bracing air of the north country. But her travelling expenses represent a number of shillings which form an impassable barrier as strong as the National Debt itself. Or, again, some one at a great distance is struck down by consumption. They have got an admission at the Brompton Hospital; but then the cruel problem of those travelling expenses emerges to the front. You slip forward with what can be forthcoming of that mystic fiver. The poor girl shall be strengthened by the bracing northern air. She shall not only be cured of her illness, but thoroughly reëstablished in her health. That poor patient's travelling expenses shall be paid from the door to the station, and from the station to the hospital. Then again there are convalescent hospitals, and homes, and retreats, where for some ten shillings a week you get three times the amount of good. The difference may make all the difference in the world—the difference between recovery and chronic illness, the difference between life and death.

Then there are certain people who labour nearly all through their lives under a kind of chronic impecuniosity. Working as hard as they can they can never exactly attain to the happy point of balancing expenditure and receipts. As Mr. Micawber very truly observed, 'If a man had twenty pounds a year for his income, and spent nineteen pounds nineteen shillings and sixpence, he would be happy; but if he spent twenty pounds one he would be miserable.' There are certain people in whose case a small

present will convert a deficit into a surplus. A clerk or a curate will hardly get the non-elastic ends of an income to meet. Then comes the good genius with a magical fiver, perhaps persuading a few other good geniuses to do the same thing. A whole family may thus be lifted up beyond the level of want and declension to find life sweet and hopeful, and that useful and honoured careers are opened to its members. Of course I am aware that to the votaries of political economy there is a radical defect in all this discussion. They are much more ready to administer kicks than halfpence to the impetunious. The Sermon on the Mount would find little space in an economical treatise. Their rule is that all almsgiving is a great mistake. They are blatant enough at some times, but let there come a mining accident at Abercarne, or a sinking steamer in the Thames, and their blatant cries are lost in the outburst of national pity and generosity. Go, my friend, and drop your anonymous contribution into the box at the Mansion House. Of course you are told that you incur the risk of helping undeserving people. But first satisfy yourself about the distress, and you may afterwards discuss the question of desert. And if you have a trained practised eye you can soon get a skill in discerning the rights of a case, and even if you make a blunder the

blessing you intended will return into your own bosom.

I have said a great deal respecting the higher purposes of the extra bank-note; but much might be also said, on a lower and more popular plane, on the great conveniences and comforts of the extra fiver which is free from any purposed demands upon it. The extra note gives you a great deal of liberty of choice; it sets you free to do what you like. You get the book or the picture or the bit of furniture which you meet with by a happy chance, and can get as a real bargain. You take the express instead of an ordinary train—or give up the train altogether for that ride across a fine country in a post-chaise, which Dr. Johnson considered as the acme of human enjoyment. You call for your bottle of Steinberg Cabinet or '34 port. You can give a quiet dinner at your club to men, or a box at the opera to the ladies. You are never embarrassed and never at a loss. You are never obliged to 'cut things fine.' I do not dwell on the more obvious and secular uses of the fiver. Only there is a real connection between these uses and that higher use which I have pointed out. A man who knows

how to give a fiver to others is never at a loss for fivers for himself. He may scatter abroad, and yet may be rich at home. His mirth is without hollowness, his conversation without guile, his innocent enjoyments without satiety or dissatisfaction. These fivers are the rarest and most lasting of all his monetary possessions. They come back to him in a hundred ways; and when everything else is lost, they appear on the credit side of the books of the Recording Angel.

FORTUNES MADE IN BUSINESS.

I.

SOME GOSSIP ABOUT THE OLD CITY GRASSHOPPER.

THE great golden Grasshopper (rather dingy at this moment) still crowns the Royal Exchange. That London landmark, in spite of all changes, must always be regarded, by right of its position and historic associations, as the chief temple of British commerce. Even in these days, when business habits are so altered, when nearly every great interest possesses its own special 'exchange,' we catch at the old centre a muttered echo of the din of other days. For here, as of yore, on foreign-bill days, assemble the money-changers of all nations to hold their market, and adjust the London rate, although no walk like the ancient 'Pawn,' with its hundred shops, surrounds them.

It may not be amiss, then, for our purpose to recall for a moment the old story connected with the Grasshopper, which reminds us at once how the British money-market struck root, and under what curious conditions the early adventurer sallied forth to trade. In connection therewith we must also glance at the annals of that ancient banking-house in Lombard-street which enshrines the famous device in its history, and led the way with our 'clearing'-houses. Such discursive but suggestive notes will form no inapt preface to these chapters about 'Fortunes made in Business,' which lead us into all parts of the Empire, wherever, indeed, inventive wit and commercial resource have set their mark upon the world. In passing, we simply

mention at the moment certain great London names of which the romantic story will ere long be told at length in these pages.

If one were asked to name an example of mercantile glory, most likely that of the Rothschild family would be given, and we should accept it; for hardly the Medici or even the Fuggers of Augsburg, counts and princes of the Empire of several branches, surpassed the rapid rise of the several houses of the Rothschilds to princely wealth, and all its attendant influence. The ultimate fortune of the Rothschilds has yet to be followed; while that of the Medici, as merchants and as sovereign princes, has been traced to their extinction.

It is since the first year of this century that the history of the Rothschilds dates, and in this country it is still new. If we wish to estimate the long and enduring value of commercial power, we may take another measure; and instead of the brilliant rise of Rothschilds and Barings, we are able to follow it even for centuries, and see how its potency has enriched generation after generation, endowing new families with fortune and with honours, and laying the foundations of political power. If we try to do this, so shall we find a strange foil for the bright page—the recital of families once of note, and now extinct, without male or female to speak for them or bear their names; and the full list of those who in bankruptcy and riot have dissipated the

resources of the past, and jeopardised the possibility of retrieval.

Such a name as Child, the banker, which claims from the reign of Elizabeth, will rather serve our turn; but we may go further and beyond three centuries, and take the Greshams,* and their representatives the Martins. In the City the Grasshopper glitters aloft, and is reverentially regarded; but how little is there at first thought, and yet how much by thinking of it, that remains to us of a time so clear in tradition and so remote in time! The East India Company, like a jewel dissolved in a royal cup, has lost its existence in the birth of an immense empire, having for its subjects one-fourth of the human race; the Muscovy Company is a name; the Levant Company not even that; the Virginia Company loses its history in that of another empire of the English race. True, there are buildings and institutions, as there are others far older, which remained in Elizabeth's time, and remain now. The Royal Exchange and Gresham College Gresham founded for us.

Sir Thomas Gresham undoubtedly had this ensign of his, the Grasshopper, placed on the banking-house in Lombard-street, where it still holds place. How far back beyond him the title is to be traced is not known. Undoubtedly the banking history goes back beyond Sir Thomas Gresham, although it may not attach to 68 Lombard-street, but to some other house there or elsewhere. Sir Richard Gresham, the father, held that office of the King's Exchanger for Henry VIII., to which Sir Thomas succeeded.

There is, however, an earlier name, believed to have preceded

Gresham in the Grasshopper house, and that is Matthew Shore, the goldsmith. In the ballad of 'Jane Shore' she says,

'In Lombard-street I once did dwell,
As London yet can witness well,
Where many gallants did beholde
My beauty in a shop of golde.'

There the King, Edward IV., is fabled to have seen her, and for him she did penance on his death in 1483. Far back as this date is, it comes within reach of the Greshams; but like many an ancient claim, full evidence for it is now wanting.

The business of the Greshams, the King's Exchangers, was to arrange foreign loans for the service of the Exchequer in the great money-market of Antwerp and elsewhere on the Continent. The Lombards had long since lost their potency in that street, as in those of other towns, which still bear their name, and in which their business is still conducted, while the ensigns of the Lombards have passed to the pawnbrokers, and abroad a pawnshop is called a Lombard.

It is one merit of Sir Thomas Gresham that he counselled Queen Elizabeth to liberate the country from dependence on the foreigner, and to create a money-market here, 'not to use strangers, but her own subjects, that it might be seen what a prince of power she was.' For three hundred years it has served to supply the requirements of the home government during the piling up of debts, which have sometimes reached the sum of eight hundred millions. Not only have we been made independent of the foreigner, but we have been enabled to lend to the foreigner, and at length to use also the money of the foreigner, and to become in this day the money-market of the world for buying, for selling, for borrowing.

* For a lengthy history of the Greshams, see the 'Favourites of Fortune,' *London Society*, vol. ii. p. 392.

Beyond this, England has been trained to provide resources for public works, in which as yet we surpass the world. All this has no more been done by Sir Thomas Gresham than is the oak-tree of a hundred years' growth made by the man who of forethought sows an acorn. It is worth, however, pausing to note how the well-advised policy of one man has borne fruit not only to the extent which he had fairly expected, but far beyond. Indeed, such a fact is far more to the lasting honour of Gresham than his Exchange, in the corridors of which we walk, for among the great feats of commerce must be reckoned such as those which endow the country with a new industry, like Dudley, Cort, Crewe, Neilson, Heath, Bessemer, Siemens, to name only those who have laboured in one branch, rather than to celebrate the case of those who have greatly enriched themselves.

Gresham made it seen what a prince of power Elizabeth was when the Burses of Antwerp, the Hanse Towns of Venice, Genoa, and Florence were still in their pride. The money-market of London has outlived these, and gone far beyond their great successor at Amsterdam. So in our days, in this light, it is 'what a prince of power' is Queen Victoria! Much of the influence of ambassadors and ministers abroad is due to the knowledge of this prerogative of the citizens of England. Even at this moment the financial credit of England is put in the balance against the sword of Russia. The Grand Duke of Muscovy was earnest to marry Queen Elizabeth, but Gresham did not foresee that the expedients he had devised for increasing the might of England were to be brought to bear in resisting the vast empire of successive Czars.

Gresham is a good subject to begin a history with, for it has what is earlier than history, tradition and romance. The story of the Grasshopper is a pretty one, only the rude hand of the antiquary sets it all aside by sternly proving that Gresham was no foundling, but born in wealth. There are plenty of tales left. How is it with this? It is gravely related, in a work called Lawson's *History of Banking*, that the Spanish ambassador to the English Court having extolled the great riches of his King, the master of the Indies, and of the grandees of Spain, before Queen Elizabeth, Sir Thomas Gresham, who was present, told him that the Queen had subjects who at one meal expended, not only as much as the daily revenues of the King, but also of all his grandees, and added, 'This I will prove any day, and lay you a heavy wager on it.'

So Gresham outbragged the Spaniard in his own line. The ambassador, biding his time, came unawares to the mansion of Sir Thomas in Bishopsgate, and dined with him, when, finding only an ordinary meal, he said,

'Well, sir, you have lost your stake.'

'Not at all,' answered Sir Thomas; 'and this you shall presently see.'

He then pulled a box from his pocket, and taking out of it one of the largest and finest Eastern pearls, showed it to the ambassador. After which he ground it down, and drank the dust in a glass of wine, to the health of the Queen his mistress.

'My lord ambassador,' said Sir Thomas, 'you know I have often refused fifteen thousand pounds for this pearl. Have I lost or won?'

'I yield the wager as lost,' said

the ambassador; 'and I do not think there are four subjects in the world that would do as much for their sovereign.'

Legend tracks the man. Here is one that would do for a medieval saint, and also from Lawson. It must be borne in mind that the street before the Grasshopper (that is, 68) was then used as the Bourse for London, which is not unlikely. Gresham, trading to the East Indies, by which he is reputed to have made much money, at one time was disconcerted by the non-arrival of some ships, which, it is alleged, had caused him much embarrassment. While despondingly walking in Lombard-street, a sailor came up to him and presented a letter, which conveyed the joyful intelligence that two of the ships had arrived, and that the box the bearer would deliver contained some diamonds and pearls of great value as a sample of the riches the ships had brought home.

Perhaps it was a large pearl out of this box, or out of the two ships, which figured in the other tale. After getting the good news on the Bourse, Gresham could do no other than found at his own cost an Exchange, laying the first stone on June 7, 1566; and on January 23, 1571, it was opened by Queen Elizabeth. The Queen's majesty, attended with her nobility, entered the Bourse on the south side; and after that she had viewed every part thereof, and seen a kind of industrial exhibition of all sorts of the finest wares in the City, she caused the same Bourse, by a herald and trumpet, to be proclaimed 'The Royal Exchange,' and so to be called thenceforth and not otherwise; and so it has been.

The Grasshopper house had a doorway on the Change-alley side, as well as in Lombard-street;

and from the Change-alley door Gresham would wend his way to and fro. Besides the Exchange, Gresham founded the college bearing his name, and on which he bestowed his own residence; but which, instead of being, as he intended, the University for London, which in our generation has been created, shows only a shadow of his great design.

The College was indeed a noble design, and meant to supply a great want. Until the suppression of the monasteries, London had not been deficient in institutions for superior education. The great houses of the Benedictines and other orders remained what the colleges at Oxford had originally been; and London was well supplied with schools for literature, science, painting, and music. Those who wanted degrees for technical purposes could proceed to Oxford or to Paris; but the essentials of a liberal education were abundantly available in London.

The destruction of the monasteries was attended with that of all the accompanying attributes—not only the provision for the poor, but also the colleges, the grammar-schools, and the teaching and practice of art. This was indeed a heavy blow to the cause of education, and Edward VI. and Elizabeth and their ministers applied themselves to the restoration or creation of grammar-schools and common schools.

Gresham wished to go beyond this, and to give the metropolis a college with a complete faculty of the seven liberal arts and sciences. Although the schools of music at St. Paul's, Westminster Abbey, and the Chapel Royal had been kept on foot, and even became nurseries and schools of the new drama, Gresham must have considered that the higher branches

of musical instruction were not sufficiently provided for, as a professorship of music was founded in the College—and this is still maintained.

Thus it will be seen that, had this plan been carried into effect, London would, in all matters of superior instruction, been independent of Oxford and Cambridge. It was, however, fitfully set in action, and, though many eminent men were professors, it never realised the founder's intentions. It fell away, and was at the best a club of lecturers; but the professors and the building had their share in the early history of the Royal Society. This is another incident of the Gresham chronicles.

At length, the Gresham professorships became a private job of the Gresham Committee of the Corporation of London and of the Mercers' Company, who gave away the appointments as sinecures. The great object of the pensioners was to avoid doing anything at all. At length, of late years, a partial reform was made, and some of the professors give a few popular lectures. So far as a college is concerned, the institution is a farce, and is the only one of Gresham's works which yields little fruit.

Others, however, in our generation, set themselves to the task, and Brougham carried into effect what Gresham designed. The establishment of University College, and afterwards of King's College in rivalry with it, afforded the constituents for a university—that of London—greater than Gresham could have contemplated, for the University of London has colleges affiliated to it in England and Ireland, and its degrees have been accorded to students in the Colonies and in India.

It is a strange instance of how small society is and how its threads

get entangled, that one of Gresham's country houses, Osterly, which was a favourite of Queen Elizabeth, was afterwards a seat of the other banker, Child, and now belongs to his descendant, the Earl of Jersey. Three hundred years ago Elizabeth visited the newly-built manor-house of Osterly in 1578. If Alfred the Great was for ages known as 'England's darling,' surely Elizabeth must have been 'England's love,' such was the devotion paid to her in romantic homage, as we know in the tales of Essex, Raleigh, Shakespeare, Sidney. Besides the story of Gresham's swallowing the pearl in her glorification, it is believed at Osterly, and we may believe it, if we will, that the Queen much admired the new house all but a walled courtyard. When the Queen had gone to bed at night, Gresham got together all the men he could, and demolished the walls, so that in the morning the Queen could admire the improvement she had suggested and the devotion of Gresham. The like history is to be found elsewhere, and sometimes the courtier has hewn down in the night a grove of trees.

In the next year after this, Gresham died (in 1579), and was buried near his residence in the church of St. Helen, Bishopsgate. Ending in legend, it is said the wealth of the man who gave such princely gifts to his fellow-citizens was found to consist chiefly of gold chains.

What has not been filled with fact in this account has been pieced out with legend; but the history of the Grasshopper afterwards is so bereft of record and tradition, that even the skill and research of the antiquarian of the house, Mr. John Biddulph Martin, has not been able to restore it. The Great Fire of London burnt bank-

ledgers and private books, and Mr. Martin, in his privately printed work, entitled the *Grasshopper*, was obliged to leave a long blank. This was partly supplied afterwards by the antiquary, Mr. F. S. Hilton Price, of the rival house of Child, and the author of the *Marigold*, named after their ensign, and of *A Handbook of London Bankers*.

Leaving Sir Thomas Gresham, we have a link in Smythe, his apprentice; for we find a Smythe afterwards figuring among the worthies of the Grasshopper. But when we come to history again, we find the house in the hands of great goldsmiths and bankers, Charles Duncombe and Richard Kent. To them the books of Child's bear witness in 1669; and as a man must be supposed to have had a father, so must there have been a paternity for the leading firm before that date, and an old business, which must have taken its years of growth.

When we come to the first list of London bankers in the *Little London Directory* of 1677, two centuries ago, then we find these bankers recorded at the Grasshopper in Lombard-street. As Childs had their peerage, so have the Martins theirs in this Charles Duncombe, from whom Lord Faversham is descended, and whose name was best known in our days by the familiar 'honest Tom Duncombe,' the popular member for Finsbury.

The reputation of Charles Duncombe was less brilliant than his wealth. High he stood in his business; for when Charles II. shamefully shut up the Exchequer, and stole the bullion of the London bankers deposited there, to the ruin of many firms, the Grasshopper escaped. Duncombe was banker to the Earl of Shaftesbury and the Marquis of Winchester,

and, as recorded by Bishop Burnet in his *History of his own Time*, the Earl communicated the coming event to Duncombe, who saved the money of his customers. In the chain of events it is supposed that the Marquis of Winchester likewise gave warning to Childs, with whom also he had an account.

Evelyn, in 1696, complains of the fraud of the bankers and goldsmiths, who carried on the lucrative business of money-changers, or 'shroff' as it is called in the East, plying to and fro with the depreciated currency, good gold being rarely at less than fifteen premium against common silver coin. Evelyn speaks in his Diary of 'Duncomb, not long since a mean goldsmith, having made a purchase of the late Duke of Buckingham's estate at neere 90,000*l.*, and reputed to have as much in cash.'

The second Duke of Buckingham was a Villiers, head of the house, which in the end furnished a husband for the heiress of the Childs, another intermingling of the web. One branch of Villiers, beggared, sold its estate to a banker, and another built up its fortune on the estate of a banker.

Duncombe had so much money that he kept a large sum at Child's, as Mr. Price found out in the books; for in 1696 it was drawn out, most likely towards the purchase of Helmsley.

Duncombe, engaged in political life, became Secretary of the Treasury, and it was according to the manner of the time that he should be accused of appropriating the funds of the Exchequer to his own use. Being a member of the Commons he was by that House committed to the Tower. He was expelled the House of Commons, and by a division of 188 to 103 his property was ordered to

be confiscated. This being made a party question, he had the good fortune to obtain the intervention of the House of Lords; but his case must have been a bad one, as he was only released by one vote, which belonged to the Duke of Bolton, the former Marquis of Winchester, who thus repaid Duncombe's old service.

Duncombe held up his head; and though members of Parliament disapproved of his fingering the funds of the Exchequer, the neighbouring shopkeepers condoned the offence, and as Sir Charles Duncombe he was Lord Mayor of London in 1709. The other house of Child also had its Lord Mayor; so had the very old house—but still younger than that of Child, Hoares—of the Golden Bottle, displayed above their portal in Fleet-street.

The founding of the Bank of England helped the Lombard-street bankers rather than lessened their business, and notwithstanding Duncombe's troubles the business was well conducted by the Mr. Richard Smythe already referred to. He was Duncombe's partner, and a banker of great eminence in the reign of William and Mary. He lived at the Grasshopper. He is said to have taken an active part in the restoration of the coinage in 1695-6, a matter which was looked upon as of national concern, and in which Sir Isaac Newton, then Master of the Mint, had so large a share, and on which he wrote valuable papers.

Smythe's portrait still overlooks the bank-parlour, and represents him in a flowing wig and blue-silk dress, standing under the colonnade of the Royal Exchange, built by his predecessor Gresham. This portrait conveys to every one the evidence of Lely's style, and was said to be by his pupil Huysman; but on cleaning in

1872, the inscription 'J. Hargrave, 1760,' appeared upon it. The probability is that the original, by Lely or Huysman, was in 1760 removed by a member of the Smythe family, and this fine copy substituted.

Smythe, as said, was a presumed link with Gresham, and is with the present banking family. Andrew Stone, another apprentice and partner, married the daughter of Mr. Holbrooke. Smythe's sister, a great granddaughter of this Stone, married John, the grandfather of the present partners, Richard Biddulph Martin, John Biddulph Martin (the historians of banking), and W. A. K. Martin. By this marriage, the Martins are connected with the other banking family of the Laboucheres, and its peer Lord Taunton, and with the Barings and their peers, Lord Northbrook and Lord Ashburton.

This Richard Smythe it was who took as a clerk Thomas Martin. This Martin was a West-countryman, whose father William, grandfather Thomas, and great-grandfather William, who died in 1653, had been mayors of Evesham, where their tombs are still to be seen. Thomas Martin became a partner on Smythe's death, and afterwards his brothers John and James Martin.

The will of Andrew Stone affords one curious illustration; for he leaves his share of the business to Thomas Martin on payment of 9000*l.* among the widow, her mother, and Nicholas Torriano. We may therefore consider the goodwill of such a business as then worth from 20,000*l.* to 30,000*l.*, a large sum for those days. His sons were George, Primate of Ireland; Andrew, tutor to George III.; and a third, Richard Stone.

It is not necessary to give the

details of the succession among the Martins and the Stones constituting the house, which till our time was known as 'Martin Stone's,' though now, as on some occasions before, 'Martin's.'

Thomas Martin putting his brother James into the house, the latter became member for the borough of Cambridge. Thomas, who lived so long in the City, died nevertheless at no less an age than eighty-five at Clapham. The Martins, however, always had an eye on their western country. John, in 1738, rebuilt the old house at Overbury, after its destruction by fire. Then began that connection with the borough of Tewkesbury which has only lately been dissolved, and for which they sat above a century. They sat also for other places. The chief distinction of this long senatorial career was that James Martin, who sat for thirty-one years on the Liberal side, obtained the title of Starling Martin. Being opposed to the coalition of Fox and North at the ruin of his party, he put on record a wish that he could train a starling to speak, so that it might perch on the Speaker's chair and ever and anon cry, 'No coalition!'

The only City honour gained by this family was that Joseph Martin served Sheriff in 1770.

Besides the constitution of the English corn-market by Gresham, another financial reform is associated with the Grasshopper, and that is that the clearing among London bankers was first and for a long time held there. This institution of the clearing by London bankers has had an enormous influence on the London market, for it has enabled an extraordinary facility and rapidity to be given to transactions and an enormous economy in the use of money. It is this feature of the London

money-market, the small amount of actual money with which it is worked, which distinguishes the London money-market from others.

It was in its beginning a very simple expedient: that bankers, instead of paying separately, should exchange the cheques they held against each other, and only pay once a day the balance in cash. This has since been greatly extended and improved, and in 1810 the bankers were obliged to take a clearing-house for themselves in Lombard-street, and now they want a larger one. Upon the model of this banking institution the great railway clearing-house has been established here, and other like establishments in other countries. The tickets that pass over several lines, and the payment for which has to be divided among the companies in various proportions, is thus cleared. By this means not only is a passenger in this country enabled to take one ticket anywhere in these islands, but from London to St. Petersburg or Constantinople, or from New York to San Francisco. Thus one good principle receives various developments, and institutions dissimilar in form grow from a healthy root.

The connection of the clearing-house is held to be recorded by an entry in the ledger for 1773: 'Quarterly charge for use of clearing-room, 19s. 6d.' Unluckily, in this grand series of books, still ranging from 1731 to this day, there is a very ugly entry in 1751: 'For Brydges, for killing the buggs in the shop, 17. 1s.' The smaller animals nevertheless kept up the war and mastered the great bankers; so that in 1794 they had to pull down the house, and for a time move into Change-alley beyond their back door. In that year the bank was rebuilt,

and was held to be one of the best in the street, so that a coloured drawing of it is preserved in the Guildhall Library. A late extension is marked by the judicious skill of the Martins and their tender love for their ancestral house.

If during the Great Fire of London the building had suffered, in the last century it sustained a very sensible loss. For centuries a gilded grasshopper had stood over the doorway. This is recorded by Pennant, who ominously wrote: 'Were it mine, this honourable memorial of so great a predecessor should certainly be placed in the most ostentatious situation I could find.' The Martins appear to have thought that the grasshopper had so long taken care of them that it was his business to do so, and not theirs to take care of the grasshopper. During the rebuilding the grasshopper mysteriously disappeared, and may still remain in the collection of some Marquis of Waterford of that day or of some grasping antiquary. Although supposed to be put safely away, yet when, on the new year of 1795, the new banking-house was opened, no grasshopper was there.

Mr. Hilton Price relates that the same casualty befell the sign of the Crown of Messrs. Willis, when their house was rebuilt, and the Golden Anchor, the sign of Snows and Strahans. The Martins, however, have still a Grasshopper in the bank, but he is no better than the one atop of the Royal Exchange.

They seem to keep with equal reverence some old musketoons or blunderbusses, which appear from the books to have been last put in repair, some say in 1767, or perhaps in the No-Popery riots of 1780, and which, if attempted

to be used now, might prove fatal to the operators, except for the providential circumstance that, in all likelihood, there is no ammunition in any bank in Lombard-street. It may be added that in all probability there is no water in any of the buckets still kept in the street.

We may note, what is not recounted by Mr. J. B. Martin or Mr. Price, that in 1780, a party of the Life-Guards bivouacked for a short time in Lombard-street, lighting fires in the roadway; that soldiers were stationed at each cross-street, and that the Martins and their neighbours were not allowed to go out after dark, nor until sunrise. Two nights before was seen from the neighbouring roofs, and it may be from theirs, all the Roman Catholic chapels in London blazing, and the next night Newgate, and all the many prisons in the City and elsewhere in the metropolis.

Some of the customers, as Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth, have been already named; and many old accounts of above a century are still on the books, as Gonville and Caius College, 1761; George Gostling, 1763; Charrington, Moss, & Co., Thomas Boddington, Samuel Brandram, and Peter Floyer, 1770. There are, however, accounts of a century and a half old, as Lovibond, Pappilion, Colclough, Wollaston, Van Notten; and of later date, J. Peter Burrell and J. Fullerton, 1742; Aislabie, 1748; Van Voorst and Boon, 1759. The Messrs. Barings, kinsmen to the partners, began business in 1762, and opened their account in 1764.

Thus we briefly illustrate the antiquity, the ramifications, and the continuous moral working, which are consequent on some of our commercial establishments.

II.

THE BRADFORD INDUSTRIES: MESSRS. FISON & CO. OF BRADFORD.

THERE is one region in Yorkshire which, in close juxtaposition, possesses three mighty towns, whose work is felt throughout the country and the world. These three localities are Leeds, Halifax, and Bradford. They afford perhaps the most important chapters in modern industrial history. They abound in striking examples both of sudden bursts of prosperity and the gradual construction of immense fortunes, and also with the development of the highest problems bearing on the interests of society. On the present occasion we limit ourselves to Bradford. The traveller who arrives at the station finds himself almost at once in Peel-square, surrounded with gloomy but palatial warehouses, which at once give a splendid conception of the grandeur and immensity of modern commerce. At the commencement of the present century it was only a small town, with a population of about a dozen thousand. Now the population is a hundred and fifty thousand; about fifty millions' worth of goods are stored away in these immense warehouses; and the banking accounts of Bradford amount to about a hundred millions' worth of money. It is not simply the vast financial prosperity of the place with which we are concerned. It might fare with the spinners of the worsted and the broadcloth as it did of old with those who wove the Tyrian purple or the Venetian velvet. But Bradford has connected with it vast social movements which are inseparably interwoven with the well-being of the country.

One of the Bradford firms, that of Messrs. Fison & Co., is represented by no less a personage than Mr. W. E. Forster, who was very nearly made the leader of the great Liberal party, and is a possible Premier. Whatever may be the future lot of this distinguished statesman, it is so far true that his Education Act has revolutionised and elevated the character of the nation. In such gigantic works as those of the Messrs. Salt of Saltaire, we see the highest point to which industrial science has attained, and also the persistent prosperous effort to combine with commercial success the moral, intellectual, and religious improvement of the masses of operatives. Both of these great firms shall here be dealt with, as also the general history of the local trade, and the great fortunes which have sprung out of it. We select Messrs. Fison, not as the greatest Bradford firm, but as one which is exceedingly representative, and also because its silent partner, Mr. Forster, connects trade and fortune-making with subjects of the greatest political, moral, social, and religious importance.

Yorkshire is in itself a kingdom—a royalty such as many a king might envy. It is about the size of Wales or of Palestine. It has its mountains and its sea; streams, moorlands, dales; its deep treasures of the earth—the thick-ribbed iron and coal; rich plains of sheep, and the green encircling forests. In the West Riding the great county has its resounding workshops and its busiest hives. And here Nature

has also made the glorious county 'rich in man and maid,' and fashioned them of a sort congenial to the clime—patient, laborious, quick-witted, masterful. But as one moves through the bustling streets and the wilderness of chimneys in Leeds and Bradford, there comes before one the meek patient face of the sheep cropping the thin moorland herbage or in the green meadows. There is here, in truth, the winning of the Golden Fleece. To the peaceful sheep in our own land and in Australian wilds and vast continental plains is due the mightiest triumph of modern industry. Again let us think that all the broadcloth and the worsted are simply, through the chemistry of Nature, transmuted grass—the thin steely blade which pierces the soil and struggles to the upper air, made of the mould and microscopic seedling, the rain and the sunshine. The great industries of Leeds and Bradford are entirely constructed from the fleecy clothing of the sheep. Leeds takes the short wool and makes cloth; Bradford takes the long wool and makes worsted.

Who first converted the wool of the sheep into warm durable clothing is as idle an inquiry as who launched the first boat or baked the first loaf. 'The world knows nothing of its greatest men;' and few men can have been greater than he who invented the ploughshare, or for clothing added the fleece of the living animal to the skins of the slain. When we speak of this trade in our own country, it is common to attribute the origin to the Fleming. But before the last Roman had left Britain, manufactured wool was transported from our shores. The Conqueror and his son Henry brought over the Flemings and settled them in that little England beyond Wales, Pembroke-

shire; and Edward III., through his marriage with a daughter of the Count of Hainault, brought over large colonies of them to settle in this country. Then my Lord High Chancellor first took his seat upon the Woolsack, his judicial mind discerning that the Woolsack was then the very basis of British prosperity. The native element has constantly been reinforced by the foreign element. The thousands of woollen weavers who fled from the Low Countries during the persecutions of Alva, with their superior methods and material, accelerated the progress of the trade. Similarly the worsted trade received great impulse from the expatriation of the French Protestants. Then, again, we got some of our best foreign wool from the merino breed in Spain. During the Peninsular War we had to go to Germany for Saxon and Silesian cloth. The wool imported into England often goes back to its native country with the mark of English manufacture. Most of the merino wool now comes from Australia; and the better the wool the worse the mutton. Germany is now the great source of the supply of shoddy, which we regret to perceive is a vast and increasing business, and affecting other lines of life besides the worsted trade. Old Fuller asserts that the word 'worsted' was derived from the village of Worsted in Norfolk. In the same way we get 'calico' from Calicut, and 'cambric' from Cambrai. Large numbers of the foreign settlers came to Norwich, which was then the Bradford of England. In the irony of time, Bradford and Norwich have transposed their position. In the present depressed state of trade a gleam of comfort is afforded by the prosperous statistics of the woollen business. Our imports are great;

but we can still rely mainly upon ourselves. At the present time about eleven millions' worth of wool is produced—some compensation to the farmer for the loss of protective duties, and also an encouragement to us to depend more upon ourselves.

Bradford stands at the head of a valley, where its own becks, with other wandering streams, meet the Aire. In this valley, before the days of drainage, the waters would collect; and Bradford, like the other Bradford in Wiltshire, obviously means the Broad Ford. Oxford and the Bosphorus have a kindred meaning—the ford for Oxen. We obtain glimpses of old historic Bradford in the time of the Civil Wars. Fairfax commences his Memoirs with saying, 'The *first action* we had was at Bradford.' No other town suffered more than Bradford in these wars. There was long a tradition that before the Earl of Newcastle entered the town an apparition appeared to him, as he lay in bed in Bowling Hall, and importuned him with these words, 'Pity poor Bradford, pity poor Bradford!' Lady Fairfax was taken captive here, but was promptly sent back to her lord. Since that time, however, Bradford has had a good deal of what we may call social fighting to do. It has had its Luddite riots, the fights with hard blows about the introduction of machinery, the fight with hard words about the protective duties on wool. 'Peace has her victories no less than war;' and some of the greatest of these victories have been won in the West Riding.

When the place first began its business of making worsted stuffs of the long-stapled wool is not exactly known. About a hundred years ago Dyer wrote his poem of the 'Fleece.'

'Roll the fu'll cars adown the winding Aire,
Load the slow-sailing barges, pile the
pack
On the long tinkling train of the slow-
paced steeds.'

It is very interesting to trace the gradual advances of this immense business. The manufacturer would make visits to far-off hills and dales, then innocent of chimneys and undefiled with smoke. The peasants had long been preparing for his coming. The one-thread wheel was as much part of the furniture of a thrifty housewife as a sewing-machine is at the present time. In glade, on green, and by the hill-side might be seen Cowper's young cottager sitting spinning at her door, or the busy housewives plying their trade. The manufacturer would distribute the wool and receive back the yarn which his agents had collected. His journey through the wild lonely country would not be without its perils. Some steady roadster would lead the way, and the little caravan would be closed by some stout well-armed fellows. A sad story is told of a young member of the great Foster firm, who was caught in a snowstorm on a wild moor; he fell grievously hurt into a morass, and was found dead next morning, with his faithful dog lying upon his breast. After the yarn had been procured, the next step was to give it out to the weavers. In due time the fabrics were ready for sale in the market, having passed to a considerable extent through the hands of the dyers. The stuffs were then distributed throughout the kingdom, being carried on droves of pack-horses to the various fairs and market-towns.

In looking at the vast development of the Bradford trade, of course the main salient feature is the progress of mechanical invention. Many stories might be told of the goodly fortunes achieved by

machinery. It must be said, to the credit of some manufacturers, that they kept on old people who had been accustomed to work by hand. The machinery for wool-combing quite revolutionised the Bradford trade. The hand-labour has now been entirely changed for machine-labour. The wool, which used to cost two shillings a pound when combed by hand, costs fourpence a pound when combed by the machine. This is done by Mr. Lister of Manningham's machine, known by the name of Heilmann's Patent. The machine was originally invented by a Frenchman named Heilmann, but it was brought to perfection by Mr. Lister. He sold it to the Akroyds and Salts for 40,000*l*. In 1847 Mr. Lister re-bought the patent for the price which had been paid him for it, the vendors reserving the right of use. The practical result is that the Salts and Akroyds got the patent for nothing, and Listers, Salts, and Akroyds have all made their fortunes.

Many other inventions have been made, which have gradually brought the trade to the highest perfection, and which have intensified the energies and multiplied the resources of the place. About a hundred years ago a canal was formed, which connected the trade of Bradford with the Liverpool and Leeds canal. It is a great mistake for the tourist to suppose that the canals are profitless and defunct. Those black waters are still laden with heavy barges, and, though to an immense extent superseded by steam, form highly remunerative companies. Then the fortunes which have been realised by gas- and water-works in those localities! The railway is now brought home to every great business. There are branch-lines and sidings in every

direction. Steam is the useful slave which is turned to myriad uses, locomotion being only a single department; and the Yorkshire industries show a multiplicity of inventions to which it is subsidiary. It is the cheapness and abundance of that 'bottled sunshine,' coal, which insures its supremacy to Bradford.

One might take the mills of Messrs. William Fison & Co. as a very good specimen of the West Riding worsted manufacture, more fairly representative than a larger concern. The firm has been a prosperous one; and the silent partner, the member for Bradford, may be put down as a wealthy man. The works are situated in the pleasant village of Burley in Wharfedale, two miles from Otley, and equidistant, ten miles, from Leeds and Bradford. The river is not so beautiful as it is higher up, as it streams by Bolton Abbey and the glorious woods by Barden Tower. The poet Gray makes a mention of Wharfedale in his exquisite letters. 'Whorl'dale, so they call the vale of Wharfe, and a beautiful vale it is, as well wooded, well cultivated, and well inhabited, but with high crags that border the green country on either hand; through the midst of it, deep, clear, full to the brink, and of no inconsiderable depth, runs in long windings the river.' The classical name of the stream, according to inscriptions which have been found of the dates of Severus and Caracalla, is sometimes used for the river and sometimes for the river genius. This is the Latinised form of the 'Guerf,' or Wharfe of the Saxons. The scenery of the Wharfe has been immortalised by many great painters, and by no greater painter, and with no greater detail, than by Turner. He has worked at it both in oils and drawings.

He used to reside at Farnley Hall in much the same way that he resided at Petworth, in Sussex. 'The scenery,' writes Mr. Ruskin in his *Modern Painters*, 'whose influence I can trace most definitely throughout his works, varied as they are, is that of Yorkshire; and its rounded hills, far winding rivers, and broken limestone scars seem to have formed a type in his mind to which he sought, so far as might be obtained, some correspondent imagery in other landscapes. He had his attention early directed to those horizontal beds of rock which usually form the face of the precipices in the Yorkshire dales, projecting or mouldering away in definite succession of ledges, cornices, and steps.'

The village of Burley lies on the left side of the stream. Of course the water-power is the great *motif* of the mill. In the West Riding, wherever in romantic scenery, unless retained by the territorial lords, you find a gushing stream, there you will find the water-wheel and the mill. There is often a most striking combination of Nature in her most primitive aspects, and the ugliest designs of modern invention. Often, close by the mathematical many-windowed mill, you see the pleasant home and lovely grounds of its proprietor. You may find rare orchids in his greenhouse and fine pictures on his walls. The water-wheel of the Messrs. Fison's manufactory is supposed to be the most powerful in the whole county of York. It is thirty feet in diameter, eighteen a-breast, and of about 150 horse-power. The mills, though denounced by *Murray*, who otherwise does not mention this interesting village, as ugly, are very well built, and cover a good deal of space. They are lighted by gas

manufactured on the premises. Most of the machinery is worked by water-power. Such proprietors as those of these mills are not likely to leave the religious and intellectual wants of their people unattended to. Mr. Fison, the senior partner, resides at Greenholme, and a school is attached to the mill called the Greenholme School, which is worked on the half-time system. About ten years ago they erected a hall in the principal street for their workpeople, well supplied with periodicals and with a library. The lecture-room will hold 600 people, and is used for penny-readings and other entertainments. The number of operatives engaged is about 800, but the average attendance is only 150; so difficult is it even under the most favourable conditions to create among the artisan class any enthusiasm for intellectual pursuits. Fison & Co. are among the principal landed proprietors. They hold other mills, one of them the Junction mill at Windhill.

Mr. Forster, the distinguished partner in this firm, comes of an ancestry truly illustrious. His father was in every sense one of the best men of the day. He was the great itinerating Quaker missionary. His life and character formed a very near approximation to that of John Wesley. In any order of life his singular energy and ability would have enabled him to set his mark upon the world. Quakerism, as a religious society, is dying out; but not before it has done a great work and has entered a noble protest against the vices of society. Forster, the Quaker preacher, like Wesley, travelled all over England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and made repeated visits to America. He also carried on his evangelistic labours on the Continent. He be-

came intimately acquainted with the Gurney family, near Norwich, and married one of their connections, Anne, the sister of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton. They were married in Tenth Month, 1816. This alliance with the great Quaker family of East Anglia had a vast effect upon young Forster's business fortunes, and has greatly shaped and coloured his political career.

In the course of his wanderings the good Quaker preacher and missionary came to Bradford. The town was far from being unknown in the annals of the Society of Friends. In the time of Charles II. there were great numbers here who suffered considerably. There was one man especially, named Wynn, who had been a clothier, and become soldier, and then, going over to the doctrines of George Fox, stoutly refused to fight. He was a Quaker minister for thirty-six years. So there was a sacred Quaker tradition to be maintained at Bradford, and which Forster maintained most stoutly. He made many visits to Yorkshire, holding meetings in barns, houses, and wherever he could find an audience. Years after, one Sarah Hustler gave an account of a meeting she attended at Bradford. 'The meeting was large; most of the clergy and the ministers of the Gospel of the district were present. After an unusually solemn silence, William Forster rose. A deep impression was evidently made upon those present. Years afterwards the meeting was spoken of by persons of different denominations as a very impressive one. "That man's preaching goes to the very root of the matter and to the very hearts of his hearers."' The young minister's wife—he began his ministerial career before he was twenty—the mother of the future statesman,

had not been brought up a Quakeress. She had spent a good deal of time at Weymouth, then a fashionable watering-place, and had attracted the kindly personal notices of George III. during his residence there. A good wife, she became ardently attached to her husband's work. He describes to his friend, Sarah Hustler, the little house at Bradpole, Dorsetshire, where his only son was born: 'Our cottage is a plain-built stone house, thatched roof, and casement windows; one end comes to the footpath alongside the road. In front we have a neat forecourt, at the back a small orchard, and at the other end I hope to make a good garden. There are two parlours; one of them a neat snug room, not very large; the other, I think, may be improved and made very habitable. There is a small light room for a store closet and a comfortable kitchen. There are four lodging-rooms on the second floor—I think of converting one of them into a sitting-room—and we have also good garrets. The only objection is the distance of a mile and a half from meeting.' In 1827 he removed to the neighbourhood of Norwich, between the city and Earlham. At Norwich his son would become familiar with those manufacturing processes which had their first beginning there long before they were transferred to the West Riding of Yorkshire.

William Forster was sent to the celebrated Quaker school at Edmonton. The worthy Quakers, seeing that so many of their young men, when they went up to Oxford and Cambridge, lost their sectarianism, devised a college of their own, that they might be able to dispense with the English Universities. The school only numbered about twenty-six, and it has sent eleven members to

Parliament. William Forster, we are assured by one of the most distinguished of his tutors, made great and equal progress, both in mathematical and classical studies, and especially, though still a youth, advanced to the highest mathematical studies. It was the intention of the wise Quakers that their sons should have the advantage of a collegiate course, and complete it in such good time that, when still young, they might enter on a business career. This, we may mention, is the design with which the latest of Cambridge colleges, Cavendish College, has been established. The Quakers have the merit of being very true to each, and promoting each other's business plans. Mr. Forster made his first acquaintance with manufacturing life with Mr. Pease at Darlington. It so happened, however, that a fortunate accident gave him an opening in another direction. We give the story as we have received it, without guaranteeing the absolute accuracy of all the details. Mr. Forster's father had occasion to call, respecting some matter, on the Fisons' father in Norfolk, and in the course of conversation he happened to mention that he had a son, William Edward, whom he designed for business. Old Mr. Fison said that he had two sons just commencing business in Bradford. In this way Mr. Forster came over to Bradford, and the connection was formed.

In the life of Mr. Forster, the preaching Quaker, we find several references to his son. When he alludes to his birthday, he writes, 'The Lord bless, preserve, and prosper him!' We hear of his spending some time with his son near Bradford. In his last illness he mentions him: 'Of course you will be sure that William and Jane should hear all that is to be

heard about me, if it can be so. Dearest child, I know how tender he would have been; but I do not know that I could have wished him to witness my sufferings and my weakness (1854).' He was buried in the graveyard near the Friends' Meeting House at Friendsville, Blount County, Tennessee—'a bright sunny spot, surrounded by trees, rural and picturesque, gently sloping to the south.' At one interesting period, the political career of the son and the evangelistic career of the father run in the same groove. In the great Irish famine of 1848, father and son made a tour of charity and investigation, as, indeed, did other good and great men at the same time. Such a field would be a good training-ground for political observation, and, indeed, Ireland must always form a distinct province of every statesman's study.

Mr. Forster's place at Burley is called Wharfeside; his brother-in-law, who died lately, the Rev. E. P. Arnold, Inspector of Schools, had a place called Cathedine. Mr. Forster's name is to be carefully distinguished from that of Mr. Foster, who has a place in Wharfedale—that delicious dale whose upper waters fertilise a land which is a very paradise for the Bradford manufacturers and their 'hands.' The veteran chief of the Foster clan now enjoys a retreat—Hornby Castle—in Wharfedale, having consolidated a business and a fortune, after a series of surprises and vicissitudes rarely paralleled in the commercial history of this country. Old John Foster is a true hero of industry; his works at Queensbury, a few miles out of Bradford, up a very hilly country, form one of the greatest marvels of the manufacturing counties. His establishments come next after those of the Salts of Saltaire. His

'shed' has thirteen acres of flooring; he employs 3500 people; pays 100,000*l.* a year in wages; he consumes annually 15,000 tons of coal and 15,000 packs of wool. They are their own colliers and their own builders. They have built whole streets for their work-people; and in all their buildings they aim at cleanliness, light, air, and space. They have the rare distinction of being to a considerable extent their own inventors. They not only consume their own smoke, as all people ought to do, but they extract the maximum amount of mechanical power out of the minimum amount of fuel. Their great specialties are the modern alpaca and mohair. As a singularly accurate and acute observer says: 'As we pass through these storerooms we are amazed at the immense quantity of wool kept in stock. English hogs and wethers, wools from the Iceland Island, the black and brown locks of the Peruvian sheep, and the lustrous Angora goat's hair of Castamboul (said to be the oldest of textile fabrics), meet us on every hand. We are in imagination, then, in the inhospitable islands of the North, away to the rich mine-lands of Peru, and onwards to the plains of Asia Minor. In addition to the home consumption, these goods are exported to France, Germany, Russia, Italy, Spain, North and South America, and to the Australian colonies.'*

We must return from this

* We are quoting Mr. William Cudworth's *Round about Bradford*, a series of descriptive sketches, overlaid, indeed, with detail, but the result of immense personal labour, and very helpful in realising the general condition of things. Besides expressing our obligations for private information, we ought to mention the late Mr. James's valuable works on Bradford and on the worsted manufacture; Mr. Baines's *Yorkshire, Past and Present*; and the biographies of Mr. Forster senior, by Mr. Seebohm, and of Sir Titus Salt, by Mr. Balgarnie.

digression to the *personnel* of our article, the great national names which prominently emerge from their local surrounding. Happily Mr. Forster has been liberated from the cares of business. We hear he is prosperous in his business, and would be wealthy without his business. His apostolic father would hardly be a wealthy man. He was one of a numerous clan; but it so happened that each of the clan was childless, and their fortunes came to him. For instance, there was an uncle Josiah, formerly a schoolmaster, and who is repeatedly mentioned in his brother's memoir, who came into a little fortune which descended to him. Then, again, Mr. Forster has been peculiarly happy in his marriage, as purely illustrious as his father's. He married the only daughter of the great Dr. Arnold of Rugby, with one of those rare reputations for mental strength and purity which only blossom once or twice in a century. The present Prime Minister of this country has spoken of the 'sustained splendour of stately lives;' but there is something which is finer yet—the sustained beauty of saintly lives. Such a life was Thomas Arnold's of Rugby, Mr. Forster's father-in-law. No one will be surprised that his two brothers-in-law became Inspectors of schools under the Minister of Education.

Mr. Forster has now possession of Fox Howe, the country home of the great schoolmaster when he could escape from the flatness of Rugby to the mountains. Here his widow long resided after his most sudden and most lamented decease. Most tourists in the lakes know the spot, and have made a pilgrimage thither; it is in the immediate neighbourhood of Grassmere and Rydal Water and Windermere. Around are

woods and waters and the shadows of the everlasting hills. The pupils of Arnold and his many friends know the place well ; and, indeed, it must always be regarded as a great social and intellectual centre. These associations will be revived under the roof of Mr. Forster. It is with a certain satisfaction that we note how the trade and traffic of Bradford are combined with the solitude, the poetry, the calm retreats of the Westmoreland hills.

Bradford may lay claim to yet another statesman besides Mr. Forster. This is Lord Cranbrook, the Minister for India. About a century ago there was a well-known Hardy family residing in Great Horton-road, Bradford. The father was a solicitor practising in the town, and being a far-sighted man he invested his earnings in the industrial undertakings of the place. He became a partner in the famous Low Moor Iron Works in the neighbourhood of Bradford. His son, John Hardy, while retaining his father's interest in the Low Moor Works, followed the higher walks of the legal profession, and became Recorder of Leeds, and for a considerable time represented Bradford in Parliament. He had three sons. The eldest and youngest became members of Parliament, and the second was largely concerned in the management of the works. The youngest, Gathorne Hardy—Gathorne was his mother's surname—being disappointed in obtaining a silk gown, threw himself vehemently into politics, and became a Cabinet Minister and a peer. Mr. Hardy has closely connected Oxford and Bradford, and it was almost by accident that he did not take his title from Oxford. The title of Bradford was already taken up.

There had been dealing with the firm of the Fisons for some time a young manufacturer commencing business-life, bearing a name which afterwards became very famous, Titus Salt. He was come of an old honest Yorkshire stock, who had farmed until farming became unprofitable. His father had come to Bradford at the time of the great and sudden development of trade there, and engaged in the wool-stapling business. Titus Salt began at the lowest rung of the ladder, and made himself thoroughly acquainted with all the details of his business. He acquired a practical knowledge of combing, slivering, spinning, and weaving. The raw wool would be placed before him on the board. His first business would be to cleanse it of the natural grease, and disentangle it from all the foreign substances with which the sheep had been brought in contact. He would then separate the wool of the fleece according to the length and the fineness and softness of fibre. All this requires a keen eye and cultivated touch. Then came the washing with soap or alkali and water. The wool was then combed, which was once done by hand, though now by steam. The wool is then spun into yarn, and the yarn woven into fabric. Thus Mr. Salt was a wool-stapler ; but there were two other points to attain. One of them was that he should be a manufacturer, another that he be a buyer and seller in the markets.

The original intention had been that his firm should confine its operations to spinning. It was some misunderstanding with the Fisons which made Titus Salt resolve that he would 'spin and weave for himself.' He brought a positive industrial genius to his work. The great discoveries which

he made, which created his own fortune and many another man's fortune as well, was the discovery of the uses of Donskoi wool, alpaca, and mohair. The story has been often told, but it is well worth telling again.

His very first venture was with Donskoi wool for the worsted trade. This is the wool grown on the banks of the Russian Don. It had been extensively used for the woollen trade, and why should it not serve for the worsted? 'Daniel Salt & Son' invested largely in this substance, but were unable to dispose of it to their usual customers. Titus Salt resolved that, since he could not sell it to the manufacturers, he would manufacture it himself. He set up a separate mill, and then spun the Donskoi wool into yarn, and wove it into fabric. It was a great commercial success. It is said, indeed, that years previously the Australian wool, the imports of which now amount to nearly a million of bales, was first brought into use by accident. The first bag of Australian wool was sent by the Rev. Samuel Mander to his nephew, a Yorkshire hosier. It was so filthily dirty that no one would buy or try it, and so it was thrown on a dunghill, whence it was collected by a rag-gatherer. The firm to which the rag-gatherer sold it discerned its value, kept their secret, and for some years monopolised all the wool grown in New South Wales. George III. was, we believe, the first English gentleman to wear a coat of Australian wool to encourage the commerce of his colony.

The grandfather of the present Earl of Derby was a great naturalist, and had brought together a large menagerie. The old peer, wrapped up in his animals, could hardly appreciate the brilliant

political career of his illustrious son. At the old Earl's death his collection was brought to the hammer. Mr. Salt then bought a considerable number of the pacas or alpacas. The word alpaca is a generic word for the 'camelidæ' of the New World. The animal itself is very like an Asiatic llama or an English sheep. It is, however, a much finer animal than a sheep; eyes large and lustrous as a gazelle's, and the creature will bound off into a free bold canter. Its hair, when left to itself, will grow to a length of between twenty to thirty inches. The alpaca, like the chamois, haunts the loftiest mountain heights. Flocks are found in hundreds on the highest mountain ranges of Chili and Peru. The creature is very shy and timid, but when young is easily domesticated by the Indians.

It was in 1836 that Mr. Salt made his first acquaintance with the wool of the alpaca, which is now used so generally in the Bradford trade. He had happened to call at the counting-house of Messrs. Hegan & Co. at Liverpool. This firm had had several hundred bales of this wool consigned to them from South America. For a long time it had hung on their hands like a drug. In fact they had made up their minds to re-ship it to Peru. Mr. Salt had never seen the stuff before, but he examined it slightly. Going into the office on another occasion he examined it minutely. He took a sample away to examine it at his leisure. He shut himself up in a room at Bradford to manipulate it thoroughly and at his leisure. He went through all the processes, with which he was thoroughly familiar, scouring, combing, and testing it. Then a long glossy wool emerged, which he saw at once was admirably

adapted for the lighter fabrics of the Bradford markets. It was some time, however, before he could persuade his friends of the utility of the invention. His father strongly advised him to have nothing to do with the nasty stuff. Titus Salt, however, had the courage of his convictions. He went back to the Liverpool office, and bought up the whole consignment of wool at eightpence a pound. He determined not to offer it for sale to the manufacturers, but to manufacture it himself. He met an old friend in Garraway's Coffee-house in London, and said, 'I am going into this alpaca affair right and left, and I'll either make myself a man or a mouse.' There is a great tendency for the same industrial discoveries to be made simultaneously. There were people in England who perfectly well knew that a fine fabric might be made from alpaca wool, and had even manufactured it as a matter of curiosity. It was the genius and far-sightedness of Titus Salt that discerned the possibility of a new and great industry.

Another material largely used in the Bradford market, and first used by the Salts, is mohair, the wool or hair of the Angora goat. The name is derived from the town of Angora, between 200 and 300 miles from Constantinople. So just as one material comes from the far West, the other comes from the far East. The goats of Angora have long, beautiful, silken hair. The goat's hair mentioned in the Old Testament is supposed to be this stuff. The beautiful Utrecht velvet is woven from this. Thus, as in former times, the Turkey market is open to the English manufacturing trade, and the Bradford firms have their regular agents at Constantinople. When Mr. Salt's work-people came to

visit him at his house, they found in the park herds of llamas, alpacas, and Angora goats. The work-people came in such numbers that accommodation was provided for 5000. Like most of the Bradford manufacturers, Mr. Salt had his home away from the town seven miles; the offices of business firms in Bradford being connected by wire with the factories in the surrounding districts.

His great industrial achievement, which evidenced the immense wealth which he had accumulated, was the creation of Saltaire. The mill cost at least 100,000*l.* in building, and moreover there was the gradual acquisition of a large estate and the building of a large town. There are various points to be noted about Saltaire, especially a certain large-hearted, public-spirited, and refined way of 'doing business.' All is not done for self or profit, as might be supposed by the undiscerning. In selecting a site, convenience was first sought for; but beauty of scenery was also carefully kept in mind. The neighbourhood of Saltaire is still extremely beautiful. It is close by Shipley Glen, beloved by tourists, and beyond the hills the keen heathy moor stretches away towards Wharfedale. The position of the factories is itself very striking. On the north side, the bank is high and well wooded; the Aire itself, that useful river which does myriads of pounds' work for the factories, is here not greatly stained, and a dam across it gives a dash of white foam as a foreground to the mass of plain but good Italian building. That great engineer, Sir William Fairbairn, says of the position: 'It has been selected with uncommon judgment, as regards its fitness for the economical working of a great manufacturing establishment. The

estate is bounded by highways and railways, which penetrate to the very centre of the buildings, and is intersected both by canal and river. Abundance of water is obtained for the use of the steam-engines, and for the different processes of manufacture. Portage and carterage are entirely superseded, and every other circumstance which would economise production has been carefully considered.' It is not the commercial aspect of the place, however, so much as the philanthropic and sanitary aspect, which has created quite a literature in respect to Saltaire, and has drawn travellers from all parts of Europe. It is a model town. The Salts have housed 5000 people, each cottage with several bedrooms. At times, Sir Titus has had them all to dine with him. The following is the bill of fare on one occasion: 'Four hind-quarters of beef, 40 chine of beef, 120 legs of mutton, 100 dishes of lamb, 40 hams, 40 tongues, 50 pigeon-pies, 50 dishes of roast chickens, 20 dishes of roast ducks, 30 brace of grouse, 30 brace of partridges, 50 dishes of potted meat of various kinds, 320 plum-puddings, 100 dishes of tartlets, 100 dishes of jellies, &c. Altogether there were two tons' weight of meat, and a half-ton of potatoes. The dessert consisted of pines, grapes, melons, peaches, nectarines, apricots, filberts, walnuts, apples, pears, biscuits, sponge-cakes, &c. There were 7000 knives and forks, 4000 tumblers, 4200 wine-glasses, and 750 champagne-glasses.' The present writer made a careful visit of observation to Saltaire, which was certainly fruitful in interest and instruction. All the processes of manufacture might be traced from the rough wool to the finished fabrics. We are hardly able to reconcile Mr. Balgarnie's mention of champagne

and wine glasses with the rigorous exclusion of publicans from the Salts' dominion at Saltaire. Also the big gaudy meeting-house seemed like a huge music-hall. Still, the place goes far to realise Dr. Richardson's City of Health, and serves to obliterate the old reproach, that employers looked on *employés* as mere human mechanism, not as possessing hearts and souls, but simply 'hands.'

Various other large fortunes may be enumerated, especially associated with Bradford. The firm of John Foster & Sons of Queensbury has been mentioned. Isaac Holden & Sons of Bradford, who have also large establishments in France, have gained fortunes as wool-combers. The Illingworths and the Garnetts have made their fortunes as spinners. The Listers have very large velvet and silk mills. George Hodgson is the great loom and machine maker. The late Robert Milligan, formerly member for the borough, made a large fortune as a merchant; but, as a rule, merchants in Bradford have not made large fortunes. Mr. Ripley, the present member for Bradford, whose parliamentary vagaries have excited considerable interest in the political clubs, makes enormous profits as a dyer. His returns are popularly put down at a hundred thousand a year. Mr. Ripley puts part of his wealth to magnificent uses. He has built a whole town for his operatives, which is called Ripleyville, but it has not the real unique character that belongs to Saltaire. One of his latest benefactions has been to endow Rawdon, the parish in which he resides, with a magnificent convalescent hospital. Rawdon is an extremely pleasant village, half way between Leeds and Bradford, where many of the merchants have their

country homes. This convalescent hospital is the largest which has hitherto been achieved, and marks an era in the history of such institutions. Mr. Ripley has spent about forty thousand pounds on the edifice and the grounds, and guarantees the cost of maintenance, which, however, ought to be met by patients' payments and general subscriptions. We regretted, however, on a careful personal inspection, to observe a want of tender and humane consideration for the invalids. They have little rest and privacy, and no free access to their apartments. The Marquis of Salisbury opened the institution, being Mr. Ripley's guest on the occasion, although the building was hardly fit for opening. This illustrates the increasing connection between the landlords and the cotton-lords.

Having said so much about the masters, we must say something about the men. Indeed, many of the men have, by their industry and their savings, risen to the rank of masters. There is a strong indigenous character about the place and people. The Bradford trade has drawn together a considerable colony of Germans, who are, however, chiefly engaged as merchants, and fail to affect the local colouring. It is a great sight to see the many thousands poured forth from the mills during the dinner-hour. The young women, honest and robust girls, have their shawls thrown over their heads to shield them from the effects of the altered temperature. On Sundays the roof of cloud is removed, and sprightlier apparel sparkles in the rare sunshine. Some of the old characteristic features of the place, after much struggling, have died out. The 3d of February, in our Prayer-books, records the name of that black-lettered saint, St. Blasius, B.M.; he was a bishop in

Armenia, holding the see of Sebaste. It is related in the *Acta Sanctorum* that his flesh was scored with iron combs, and that he was finally beheaded with two boys under Agricolaus, the prefect of Sebaste, in the early part of the fourth century. He is the patron-saint of Ragusa, and is, from the combs above mentioned, considered the patron-saint of the wool-combers. The tradition, or rather the history, has left distinct traces in this country. St. Blaise is the patron-saint of the little island of Pladay, south of Arran, and had altars in the old cathedrals of Glasgow and Edinburgh. There is a village named after him in Cornwall, St. Blazey. He has a much more legitimate title than those queer Cornish saints who have so much astonished Latin theologians. His festival has been irreverently described by a modern novelist as the Feast of St. Buffer and St. Blazes. His day was a great day for the wool-combers of Yorkshire; it was celebrated every seventh year with processions and rejoicings, and was regarded as a real saturnalia. It was considered a great day at Leeds and Halifax. The last occasion, however, on which St. Blazey's day was kept with all its pristine grandeur was at Bradford in 1825. It was a most extravagant pageant, but it was the last; the dissipation and frivolity were immense. Worse than this, it led up to a great strike which seriously imperilled the prospects of the place. The great mill-owners, while plotting against the recurrence of the festival, took care to substitute something better, in the way of a School of Design and a famous Mechanics' Institution.

Let us look at the weavers' view of the case. The Bradford people have a regular North-country dialect. We extract from a little *bro-*

chure, Songs in Dialect of Bradford Dale, not the raciest example, but the one which is the most intelligible and which has a social value. Our readers will exercise their ingenuity in deciphering the Doric :

'Aw'm a weyver, ye knaw, an awf-deead;
 So aw du all av ivir aw can
 Ta pat away aat o' my heead
 The thowts an the aims of a man.
 Eight shillin a wick's what aw arn
 When aw've varry gooid wark an full
 time,
 An aw think it a sorry consarn
 Fur a hearty young chap in his prime.
 Bud ar maister says things is as well
 As they hae been, ur ivir can be;
 An aw happen sud think so mysel
 If he nobud swop places with me.
 Bud he's welcome to all he can get,
 And begrudge him o' noon o' his brass,
 An aw'm nowt bud a madlin ta fret
 Ur ta dream o' yond bewtiful lass.'

The operatives impress one very favourably. They are an upright and a downright lot. They are shrewd, vigorous, self-reliant; a little inclined, after the fine old Roman fashion, to regard strangers as their natural enemies. They will support a quack doctor—who, however, probably understood them well—and even fortune-tellers: the famous old 'Lingbob Witch' left quite a pile of money. They are clannish, perhaps a little rude. Their rough-looking homes are cosy and comfortable, and the piano is common enough in them. They have strong feelings, and back up their churches and chapels, and, we must also add, their old-fashioned public-houses. They go out in their thousands to cottage flower-shows and tea-meetings on any social pretext, and often have their trip to the seaside, or even at times a journey to the Paris Exhibition.

It should also be recorded that there is an infinite amount of benevolence and public spirit at Bradford. There is a splendid free library, the new buildings for which have recently been opened. The Peel Park is well

worth a visit from all sight-seers. A Technical School has also been established. This is most decidedly a step in the right direction. If Bradford is to hold its own, indeed if the industrial achievements of this country are not to be distanced by continental nations, technical education must assume an extent and importance which it has not hitherto found in this country.

A great deal might be written on the social aspect. This has, however, been done by perhaps the greatest literary genius which Yorkshire has produced, Charlotte Brontë, in her *Shirley*. She knew Bradford well, and passed a great deal of time at Gomersall, in its immediate vicinity. The Bradford people often go and take their visitors on a pilgrimage to the high-lying moors of Ha-worth. They meet other visitors there, from America and all known regions. The Bradford people know very well who was Mr. Yorke, in the novel, and which was Shirley's own home, and which were the parishes of the three curates. The Bradford manufacturers retain the energy, enterprise, and integrity of the typical Mr. Yorke. But in these modern days they have in keener effulgence 'the gracious gleam' of literature and art. You will not often find a better knowledge of books and men and travels than in the suburban home of the Bradford merchant, one combined with a heartier hospitality. One such home the writer gratefully recalls, protected by the woods on the heights and with the valley of the Aire outspread below. That river, which was once the only stream which fed the mills, is not now what it was. The time is passed when sportsmen recorded how they took the seven-pound lusty trout in that 'pure and limpid stream.'

The modern host will hardly be able to say, like a character in a well known Yorkshire narrative : 'We have some grouse and a few trout out of the Aire ; and if you will only stay, there is a fawn just put down.' The country has altogether changed since the time of Leland and De Foe. But even in the most crowded hives of industry there is still the reliquary grace of Nature which contends with the irony of facts. We meet with the old ivied mansion, the old Elizabethan avenue ; the stream bursts from the rock ; the bit of ancient forest is interspersed among the chimneys ; the moor-

land comes down to the very margin of the bustling township. As if to compensate for the 'burden and heat of the day,' Nature has placed this great manufacturing district within easy reach of the choicest scenery which old England can show : the bracing air and cool fountains of Ilkley ; the immemorial ruins of Bolton Abbey with its environment of woods and waters, and the great silent heathery moorlands stretching far away over the grand country ; and beyond these again, but still within easy reach, the heights and depths of our western and eastern shores.

III.

THE PIONEERS OF RUSSIAN COMMERCE: STROGONOFF, DEMIDOFF, AND POSCHOWSKY.

Introductory.

As London, by its geographical situation—placed as it is in the very centre of the land hemisphere of our globe—has concentrated in itself the commerce of the world, so Russia, geographically placed as she is, forms the commercial connecting link between Asia and Western Europe. As early as the tenth century of our era, Slav settlements existed along the shores of the Baltic, one of the most famous of which was the city of Vineta, on the island of Wollin (near Stettin). The large number of ancient Arabic coins, dating from the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, found on its site, testify to the extended commerce of Vineta. It was thus spoken of by Adam of Bremen, who wrote in the eleventh century: ‘It is the largest of all European cities personally known to me, inhabited by Slavs and other nations. . . . The inhabitants are still Pagans; but, irrespective of this, no more gentle, hospitable, and pleasant people can be found. Rich in commercial wealth, this city contains all that is rare and agreeable.’ Towards the end of the twelfth century, the city was entirely destroyed by the Danes, and never rose from its ruins. In the thirteenth century the German Hansa made Nishni Novgorod its chief dépôt for its eastern commerce, and the city thereby became so flourishing and powerful as to lead its inhabitants to ask boastfully, ‘Who can prevail against God and Nishni Novgorod?’ But when in 1478 Novgorod was taken by the Grand Duke Ivan I. Vasiljevitch, the

Hansa was driven from the city, which in consequence rapidly decayed, whilst the conquest of the Russian seaboard by Mongolians, Tartars, and Turks ruined the maritime commerce of Russia.

To bring Russia into fresh commercial relations with Western Europe, a new impulse was required, and that came from the quarter whence it could least be expected: from the North. We allude to the arrival of Richard Chancellor on the spot where now stands Archangel, of which farther on. The English Company of Muscovite Adventurers, in whose service Chancellor sailed, erected a factory at Archangel, whence they traded with Central Russia, giving in exchange for her raw produce the manufactured articles of Western Europe. For Russia in those days had no industry, and its commerce was restricted, as we have seen, to the west; to the south-east mighty neighbours had monopolised what trade there was; and to the north-east the Ural mountains seemed to form an insuperable barrier to any advance in that direction, especially as the country beyond was known to be inhabited by wild and hostile tribes. Hence to open up, as it was undoubtedly desirable to do, to Russia and the west of Europe the immense country lying on the farther side of the Ural mountains, Siberia had to be invaded and brought under Russian dominion. By whom, and how this was accomplished, and with what important results the conquest of Siberia was fraught for Russia, shall be briefly told in the life of the founder of the Strogonoffs, the first

of the families we have selected as illustrative of Russian commercial enterprise and success.

Siberia.

But first a few words on Siberia. This country, the largest in the world, extends from the Ural to Behring's Straits. Its actual dimensions cannot accurately be stated; for its northern coasts lie in the ice-bound Polar seas, and its southern frontier advances elastically towards the core of inner Asia, towards Thibet and Afghanistan. When the Russians first took possession of it, it must have been almost a desert; for even now, after all the generally well-directed efforts the Russians have made to colonise Siberia, it has not five millions of inhabitants. They are chiefly Russians and Mongolians, and very unequally distributed. The population is settled mostly along the principal high-roads, rivers, and in the milder south and west, leaving the north and east almost desert. There eternal snow covers the ground; lonely tundras, or snow-clad heaths with unsteady marshy ground, stretch far away, where even in summer nothing is seen but mighty herds of reindeers, pursued by swarms of the blood-thirsty mosquitoes of the north. Wild nomadic tribes form the only population of vast regions. Yet Nature has not treated the country in so harsh a manner in every direction. In the south and south-west there are fertile and rich tracts of land, with an almost Italian climate, capable of supporting a numerous population, when once they shall have been colonised by industrious settlers.

Besides the products of agricultural labour, for the transport of which the gigantic rivers of the country offer every facility, Siberia teems with mineral treasures.

Throughout its mountain ranges gold, platina, iron, graphite, lead, copper, and silver abound. But it was not these that first lured the Russians to the conquest of the country; the attraction was apparently a much meaner one, an animal, no larger than the marten of Europe, viz. the sable, whose fur is even now, in spite of iron and gold mines, the most valuable branch of Russian and Siberian commerce. The tiny sable led a bold adventurer to cross the mighty chain of the Ural, and finally to present to the Czar, as Cortes did to Charles V., a vast empire, conquered within an incredibly short time.

The Strogonoffs, and the Conquest of Siberia.

In the middle of the sixteenth century, Ivan II., the second of the Russian princes who bore the title of Czars, sat on the throne of the rulers of Russia in the Kremlin at Moscow. Under him, who is known in history as the 'Cruel' or 'Terrible,' modern Russia was consolidated, and the last remains of Mongolian supremacy were destroyed. Yet this blood-thirsty tyrant did more than many other rulers of fairer reputation for the civilisation of his semi-barbarous people. He invited foreign, chiefly German, artists, *savants*, and artisans to Russia; for he saw that only by the introduction of western culture his own country would be raised to an equality with other European states. The first Russian printing-office was established in his reign, and a fortunate accident laid the foundation of commercial intercourse with England. In the middle of the sixteenth century English goods could, for reasons too long to specify here, be introduced into continental markets at very low prices only. Manufacturers, there-

fore, sought for new outlets ; and an expedition of three vessels, commanded by Sir Hugh Willoughby, sailed in 1553 from the Thames to find a northern route to China and India. But two of the vessels were lost with all hands in the Polar Sea ; the third, commanded by Richard Chancellor, reached the White Sea, and landed at the mouth of the Dwina, close to a convent, on a spot where now stands the town of Archangel. Chancellor gave up the idea of penetrating to India, obtained leave to visit Moscow, and was well received by Ivan II., who entered into a commercial treaty with England.

The Czar also sought to extend the limits of his empire, which he accomplished towards the east by means of the Strelitz, the first standing army of Russia, founded by him. In 1552 he conquered Kasan, and two years after he also made himself master of Astrachan, and Russian boats crossed the Caspian Sea, the greatest inland sea of Asia. But a greater addition to his empire was yet in store for him.

A century previous to Ivan's conquests a Tartar chief had gone over to Russia. He was baptised, and received the Christian name of Spiridion. He settled in the north, where the Vitschegda empties itself into the Dwina, and founded the town of Solvytshegorsk, and began amassing great wealth by widely extended dealings in furs. The intense trading spirit that animates the Chinese must have existed in him. But there is no doubt that intellectually he was far superior to those who had converted him. Russia was scarcely yet civilised ; barbarism and ignorance characterised the people, compared with whom the despised followers of the Koran often appeared civilised.

Thus, for instance, the Mongolian understood arithmetic : the Russian did not. Spiridion, by introducing the abacus, which the lower classes of Russia, with those of China, use to the present day, conferred a positive benefit on the people. The Russians looked on the simple apparatus, too well known to need description, as a thing of magic ; but with the teachableness of the Slavonic race they soon appropriated the art of the Tartar to themselves, and transferred it from child to child. Spiridion, having trained able assistants, founded several trading stations along the Dwina and Vitschegda, penetrated along the latter river in an eastern direction as far as the locality of the modern Ust Syssolsk, where he established salt-boiling houses which yielded him large profits ; and advancing further and further east he reached the sources of the Kama, yea, the Ural, which he crossed, finally descending into the valley of the Tura, which, already on Siberian soil, pours its icy waters into the Istysch.

Once in Siberia, Spiridion soon found a more attractive and remunerative trade than salt-boiling in his intercourse with the inhabitants of the north-western parts of Siberia, receiving from them large quantities of the choicest furs in exchange for toys and other trifling commodities. As Astor crossed the Rocky Mountains and brought costly furs from the Fraser River, so the Christianised Tartar, through dangers and difficulties, established that fur trade which ruled all the markets of the world until the Hudson's Bay Company appeared as its rival. But, alas, the enemy was watching. Spiridion's former co-religionists arose against him. On one of his journeys he fell into their hands, and

tradition reports that he was planed to death alive with a kind of plane specially made for the purpose by his enemies, and that from this barbaric act his successors obtained the name of Strogonoff, said to be derived from the Russian word for a plane.

But the active spirit of the founder of the house did not die with him; his heirs continued what he had begun, and attained such distinctions and dignities as few other Russian families. Anika Strogonoff, Spiridion's son, protected by Ivan I., caused a great number of Russian families to settle on the Kama, and its tributary, the Tschussovaja; he worked salt-mines, extended the fur-trade, and finally obtained from Ivan those wide domains as hereditary fiefs. His three sons crowned the deeds of their ancestors by the conquest of Siberia, and commerce in this instance again was the pioneer and spreader of civilisation.

Ivan II., who appreciated their worth and the protection they afforded towards the East, granted them new privileges, by virtue of which they built fortified villages and small towns in the neighbourhood of the West Uralian rivers. For their defence they needed soldiers; and as the wealth and liberality of the Strogonoffs were known throughout Russia, numerous adventurers, honest men and rogues, came to take service with the great fur dealers. Russian armourers received extensive orders for every kind of material of war; and the once desert regions on the western slopes of the Ural soon resounded with busy life, colonists and artisans being freely invited to settle there. The Strogonoffs followed the example set by Ivan II. in intrusting the chief management of their affairs to Germans. The clerks of the Strogonoffs, the

sergeants who drilled their soldiers, the correspondents who were at the head of the factories, the officials and paymasters, were nearly all Germans. And well they performed their tasks. The order they introduced, the activity they displayed in every direction, contributed not a little to the successes of the Strogonoffs. Where the Tschussovaja discharges itself into the Kama there arose in 1558 the small town of Kankor; farther towards its source the strong place Kergedan; and between both extended a long line of fortified log-and store-houses and small arsenals. The small army was not left without occupation, for the neighbouring tribes became more and more impatient of the Russian yoke. In 1572 an insurrection of three powerful tribes broke out, and was only put down after severe fighting. The north-east of Russia was thus in safe hands, and Ivan poured fresh marks of favour on the merchants, who knew so well how to combine the interests of commerce with the policy of state. But battles with the mountain tribes were only the prelude of what the Strogonoffs were to accomplish on the other side of the Ural.

Among the separate states formed out of the wreck of the empire left by Dschingis Khan, the famous conqueror, was the Khanate of Turan, which had been founded about the middle of the thirteenth century in the steppes of the Khirgises. In course of time the Khans left the spot, and took up their abode on the eastern bank of the Irtisch, where they founded the town of Iskir, which afterwards was called Sibir, and eventually gave its name to the whole country. This Mongolian kingdom existed up to the time of which we are writing. The last Khan of Turan was Kutschum;

he first introduced Islamism into Siberia, and endeavoured by all means to extend it; but he encountered the Strogonoffs. By their influence Indiger, the then Khan of Turan, had in 1555 acknowledged the supremacy of Ivan, and bound himself to send an annual tribute of one thousand sables, which gave the Czar occasion to assume the title of 'Ruler of Siberia,' before he ever possessed one square yard of land in that region. But this connection did not last long, as in a few years Indiger was conquered by Kutschum. By this defeat of Indiger Russia seemed to lose her hold on Siberia, and the question was renewed whether Northern Asia was to belong to the Crescent or the Cross. Then an outlaw, Yermack, threw his sword into the scale of the latter, and Siberia became Christian.

Kutschum detested the powerful traders, who on his western frontier always kept ready a small but well-appointed army; and as he justly considered his power threatened by them, he aimed at destroying their settlements on the Kama and Tschussovaja. To defeat his plans, the Strogonoffs petitioned the Czar to be allowed to erect fortresses in Siberia. Not only was this request granted, but the Czar made them a donation of all Siberia, should they conquer it. The Czar, who was quite alive to economical considerations, moreover charged them to establish mines, seek for silver, iron, lead, tin, and sulphur in the enemy's country. Two of the three brothers were now dead; but their two sons, in company with their uncle, accomplished the great work. The latter, distinguished for his improvements in mining and saline works, was henceforth the soul of the family. He more than once personally

conducted his little army against the Mongolians into the gorges of the Ural, giving proofs not only of courage, but of strategic genius. Germans, Poles, Lithuanians, took service under him; but, above all, the Cossacks, dispersed by Ivan II., who had hitherto been the scourge of southern Russia, where, led by various chiefs, they lived by plundering caravans and making inroads into the peaceful settlements surrounding them.

One of the most notorious chiefs was Yermack, commanding six thousand Cossacks. He knew that his life was forfeited, should he fall into the hands of the Czar, who had on various occasions sent his Strelitzes against him. He also knew that in the end he would be defeated by the Czar's superior forces. As a last resource he offered his services to the Strogonoffs, who, like independent rulers, were just then complementing their army, and wanted daring hands. He directed his course to the north, and he and his followers met with a hospitable reception from the princely merchants.

Yermack proposed at once to attack Kutschum, who had recently made fresh inroads on the territory of the Strogonoffs, and had also disgusted many of his own subjects by the fanatical zeal with which he forced the Koran upon them. The Strogonoffs eagerly listened to his proposals; should he succeed, they would be rid of their most troublesome enemy, Kutschum; should he fail, they would lose nothing, and be freed from their guest Yermack, who might bring them into discredit with the Czar.

So when, in the summer of 1578, the streams were clear of ice and the tempestuous floods of the Tschussovaja began to fall, the bold Cossack thought the moment for action come. Along the banks

of the river he penetrated into the mountains, through which there were not, as to-day, well-kept roads, upon which the light tarantasse flies along. But the first attempt was unsuccessful; the intense cold drove him back to the settlements of the Strogonoffs; but, nothing discouraged, Yermack in 1580 set out on a second expedition, and amidst great perils finally reached the Tura. But the extraordinary fatigues they had undergone had so reduced his army that he could lead 1500 men only into winter quarters. A second Siberian winter had to be passed through, and when spring came, the army, originally 5000 strong, consisted of 700 men only. But they did not lose courage when Kutschum came out to meet them. At the confluence of the Irtisch and Tobol his camp stretched for miles, thousands and thousands of his tents covered the ground, and the warriors occupying them seemed to mock all hostile attacks. But Fortune favours the bold. The 26th October 1581 decided Siberia's fate, and rendered Christianity triumphant over Islamism. Firmly resolved to conquer or die, the Cossacks rushed on the fortified camp, and a terrible fight ensued, whose issue seemed doubtful for hours. But strict discipline and firearms gave the handful of brave men the advantage over a large host, loosely arranged, and armed with bows and arrows only. The victory remained with Yermack, who without loss of time hastened to Sibir, the capital of the defeated Kutschum. The place was deserted, and immediately occupied by the Cossacks. The submission of the surrounding country followed almost as a matter of course.

Yermack now sought to regain the favour of the Czar, in which

efforts he was strongly supported by the Strogonoffs. An envoy of the outlaw laid before Ivan 2400 sables from the province recently conquered for him, the Czar. The latter forgave his enemy, and made him governor of the newly-acquired territory, rightly considering that he who had won it was also the best man to keep it. He also sent him a suit of armour, which he had worn himself, as the greatest honour he could confer on him. This imperial gift, however, proved fatal to the Cossack chief; the weight of the armour drew him down when, in order to save his life from a sudden attack of the enemy, he attempted to swim across the greatly swollen Irtisch. Yermack, who had escaped the gallows and the wrath of his sovereign, was to perish by the mark of his favour. At Tobolsk, which was founded in 1587, on the spot where Yermack defeated Kutschum, a grateful country erected a memorial to the former robber, on which his name and the date, 26th October 1581, are graven.

After Yermack's death the Russians gradually advanced farther into Siberia, and their progress is not yet ended. In 1860 the lands bordering on the Amoor were ceded by China to Siberia, though virtually they had for the previous decade already belonged to Russia. Where the Russian progress will stop time only will tell, just as little as we know where the limits of our Indian Empire will finally be fixed. And it is amusing to read in W. & A. K. Johnston's catalogue of maps about the *encroachments* of Russia on the Chinese territory, and the *extension* of British territory in India. A nice patriotic distinction!

Whilst Yermack was performing his work, the thirst for gold on the other half of the globe

urged the Spaniards from country to country. In Siberia, however, the small sable drew the Cossacks more and more towards the East. It was the golden period of the Siberian fur-trade. The fur-traders, it is said, used to exchange iron and copper pans with the Yakoots for as many sable skins as the vessel would hold.

All these circumstances were favourable to the Strogonoffs. They deserved their successes; they had sent Yermack to Siberia, they had supported him, and the two sons of the first Strogonoff had fought by the side of the Cossack chief at the battle of Tobol. The Czar placed all the commerce of Siberia into their hands, and it brought them royal wealth. When afterwards great gold-washing stations were added to their enterprises, their riches became incalculable, and they made no ignoble use of them. When the country called for help, when Poles or Mongolians attacked it, the Strogonoffs were ready with counsel and act, with money and troops. All Russia acknowledged their merits and patriotic spirit. In recognition thereof the Romanoffs, on ascending the throne in 1613, determined to have their right of possessing their own fortresses and troops unimpaired. Further, free jurisdiction over their subjects was granted to them, and the privilege of being judged by the Czar and the two Chambers only. These extraordinary favours did not render the Strogonoffs overbearing. They lived like simple citizens, remained industrious merchants, though many noble Russians did not hesitate to enter into matrimonial connections with the rich trading family. And so it came to pass that already at the end of the seventeenth century the most eminent families of

Russia were related to the Strogonoffs.

But they too were to learn that royal favour is unstable. Peter the Great, who wished to centralise the imperial power, could not bear that a state should exist within the state, possessing its own fortresses, troops, and jurisdiction. With a dash of the pen, by the ukase of the 6th May 1722, he deprived the Strogonoffs of all their privileges. The measure was harsh against those whose ancestors had won their position by their activity, intelligence, and blood, and the indemnification granted by the Czar paltry—he gave the Strogonoffs the title of barons. Only in the following generation the house—then 300 years old—obtained in a double manner the title of counts. Alexander Strogonoff had married a relation of the Empress Elizabeth, and in 1761 the German Emperor, Francis I., bestowed on him the dignity of Count of the Holy Roman Empire; whereupon in 1798 the Emperor Paul raised him also to a Russian countship.

The Czars have found in the two still existing branches of the Strogonoffs distinguished servants; many have earned honoured names in the Cabinet and the field. Count Sergius Strogonoff, the present head of the family, is a man of great merit. Untiringly he develops the Uralian possessions, descended to him from his ancestors. He is one of the most zealous champions of the old Russian party, and as such promotes the national welfare to the utmost. He maintains at his own expense a large drawing school, founded by himself, at Moscow. He has also distinguished himself by archaeological works.

Since the entrance of the Russians into Siberia, the civilisation and development of the resources

of that country have made the greatest progress. A German writer has justly remarked that the local distribution of the noble metals, like a natural law, determined the colonisation of Spanish America and the course of discovery. If for 'noble metals' we put 'furs,' and for 'Spanish America' 'Siberia,' this dictum applies, with some qualification, to the region we have been speaking of. It may be added that the conquest of Siberia also gave the first impetus to the Russian trade with China, which gives Russia such an influence and position in the commercial world, and which, without Siberia, she never could have acquired. It is therefore on more than one ground that Russia will for ever remain the debtor of the Strogonoffs.

The Demidoffs, and the Mining Industry of the Ural.

Demid Grigorievitch Antufeeff, a crown-peasant of Pawtechino, removed in the seventeenth century to the government town of Tula, to the south of Moscow. On his death in 1690 he left to his son a well-established manufactory of arms and a handsome capital; small, indeed, when compared with the present wealth of the Demidoffs, but it was the foundation of this wealth. Four years after Peter the Great came to Tula. In his suite was young Schafiroff, a passionate sportsman and a crack shot, who, wanting some repairs done to a pistol, made by a then famous German armourer, was recommended to go to Nitika Antufeeff. The latter was told to take plenty of time, but to do the repairs well. In a few days he brought it back, and the gentleman, having closely examined his favourite weapon, expressed to the gunsmith his great satisfaction at the manner

in which he had repaired the pistol. But Antufeeff begged his pardon for having been unable to repair it, as it was too old, and having instead made an entirely new one. 'What!' exclaimed Schafiroff, in a rage, 'you, a peasant, pretend having made this pistol?' Humbly Antufeeff drew from his pocket a second pistol; it was the old pistol. Schafiroff was greatly surprised, and informed the Czar of the existence of this clever artist. Peter, who always put the right man in the right place, appreciated him, as we shall see presently.

In 1696, during the war with Turkey, Nitika received the order from the Czar to make 300 halberds, 'as good as this pattern.' 'I shall make them better,' Nitika proudly replied; and he kept his word. On his return from Azof, which had been ceded to Russia, Peter stopped at Tula, and visited Nitika at his house, where he drank to the health of Nitika's wife, whom he did not fail to kiss, as he was in the habit of doing to every pretty woman. From that time Nitika was in such favour with the Emperor that in 1701 he gave him a large tract of land in the forest of Milonoff, near Tula, where there were rich strata of ore, for the erection of a factory. He further bestowed on him the ironworks of Nevianska; the right of searching for copper in the Ural Mountains; and also gave him large estates, with numerous serfs; conferred on him nobility for life under the name of Demidoff, a name which his father had assumed; and in 1720 invested him with hereditary nobility. The great mines of Schuralinsk, Nishni-Tagilsk, and Werchne-Tagilsk were gradually opened by the former gunsmith, who died in 1725. His descendants gave their chief attention to the production

of iron ; but this did not prevent them from promoting several other useful objects. Thus they rendered the Tschussovaja navigable, established good roads, and in general did as much for the colonisation of the country as the Strogonoffs ; in fact, it may be asserted that these latter and the Demidoffs Russianised the Ural.

But the Demidoffs did not confine their operations to the Ural ; they reopened old ironworks on the Irtisch, and in 1725 penetrated to Lake Kolivan, and thus in course of time the descendants of the Tula gunsmith attained enormous wealth. In 1812, when Napoleon invaded Russia, the head of the Demidoffs, Count Nikolai, was able at his own expense to raise a regiment for the defence of his country, which he afterwards conducted to Paris. Prokop Demidoff—in some respects one of the most eccentric characters of his day ; that is to say, he had the courage to think for himself, and to despise what the fashion - worshipping world calls common sense, which as a rule means no sense at all—gave the princely sum of 1,100,000 roubles for the foundation of the Moscow Orphan Asylum. Count Nikolai, who had conducted the regiment raised at his cost to Paris, afterwards went to Florence, where he built the splendid villa of San Donato, which he filled with treasures of art. He also founded an Industrial Institution, where a large number of children receive primary instruction, and young men of promise a more advanced education ; every year eight young men are provided with means to travel and educate themselves into architects, mining and civil engineers, and similar technical pursuits.

The present head of the family, Prince Anatol Nikolajevitch Demi-

doff, Count of San Donato, and lord of the manor of Nishni-Tagilsk, who was educated in Paris, in his eighteenth year returned to Russia to undertake, after his father's death, the management of his enormous estates. The use he made of his riches showed his goodness of heart and sound sense. At St. Petersburg he purchased a large building and dedicated it to charitable purposes ; 200,000 meals are annually distributed in it to the poor, 150 destitute boys and girls are maintained therein, and it also contains a refuge for the protection of girls under sixteen. When the cholera devastated St. Petersburg, he erected a large hospital, and exposed himself to personal risk in visiting the sick.

The central point of the Prince's extensive operations is Ni-tag, in the Ural, but his favourite residence is his estate of San Donato. The Grand Duke of Tuscany having made him Count of San Donato, he married in 1841 the daughter of Jerome Napoleon, late King of Westphalia, and son-in-law of Frederick, King of Wurtemberg. By this union the Demidoffs became related to the Emperors of France and Russia. But the marriage was not a happy one, and after four years it was dissolved.

At Nevianska, which, as we have seen, was granted to the founder of the family by Peter the Great, is an old castle belonging to the Demidoffs, which, with its curious decorations and antiquated internal ornaments, reminds one of those times when the influence of Dutch taste asserted itself in the empire of the Czars. From the walls of the drawing-room the portraits of the Demidoffs in their old-fashioned costumes look down upon the quaint furniture around. But before the guests stands a

table loaded with game, Burgundian and Rhenish wines, champagne, and similar delicacies. It is an ancient custom thus to treat every traveller visiting the castle, close to which stands a large brick tower, whose foundations have given way, so that now it is a leaning tower. It formerly was a prison, and its entrance subterranean.

Poschowsky, and the Tobacco Industry of Russia.

Among the persons implicated in the conspiracy of Alexis against his father, Peter the Great, were Peter Poschowsky, a Russian noble, and his son, then eighteen years of age. On the discovery of the plot, Poschowsky and his son made their escape. The fugitives, however, were overtaken by the Emperor's soldiers, and the elder nobleman was made a prisoner. His son, however, was able to reach Warsaw; but his attempts to obtain a lieutenancy in the Polish or Saxon army were frustrated by the interference of the all-powerful Russian ambassador, who even insisted on young Poschowsky being handed over to the Russian police, and was the cause that led Poschowsky, provided with letters of introduction to the commercial firm of Valosky & Co. at Presburg, to turn his steps towards that city.

Russian commerce was just then rapidly developing itself. The beneficial results of Peter's policy in opening his country to Western influences were becoming commercially manifest. Ship-building material, tallow, flax, hemp, grain, even iron, were exported in exchange of the most diversified products of European industry. Certainly, the Russian language, then almost unknown to Western Europe, formed a serious obstacle to unrestricted business inter-

course. Wherefore an active and quick young man like Poschowsky, who speedily acquired German, and was a perfect master of Russian, that being his mother tongue, could not but prove a valuable acquisition to a firm with extensive Russian connections. Poschowsky exchanged the sword for the pen, and soon became indispensable to his chief, who, with the assistance of the young man, devoted heart and soul to his new pursuit, saw his import and export business increasing day by day.

In those days, when there were neither railways nor telegraphs, when postal communication was but indifferently organised, when the roads were bad and often unsafe, and sometimes impassable for the heavy and clumsy wagons on which merchandise had to be transported, personal interviews between principals or their representatives became a frequent necessity. For this reason Poschowsky received the order to go to Russia to visit his employers' correspondents, and to form new connections. The undertaking was a dangerous one for the political delinquent. But he relied on the changes that age had produced in his appearance, assumed another name, avoided towns where he had acquaintances, and thus for the space of a whole year travelled through all Russia in the interest of his firm. Then he learnt how commerce was to be carried on in Russia; he attended the large fairs of the country, arranged to have the goods in which his house dealt forwarded to them, and won for his firm such a reputation, that on his return home he was allowed a share in the business. At the age of thirty he had saved fifteen thousand florins.

The Slavs are a home-loving race, a feeling strongly expressed

in all their popular ballads and traditions. Poschowsky longed to return to his own country. Great changes had taken place in Russia. The Empress Ann, a niece of Peter the Great, occupied the throne, and yielding to the intercession of powerful friends the Empress allowed the *merchant* Poschowsky to return to Russia, which remained closed to the *nobleman*. His title was forfeited, his estates were confiscated, and as a new being, supported by what he had won by his own energy and not by inherited wealth, he reëntered Russia, whence he had been driven twelve years ago, and immediately founded the first Russian mercantile establishment, according to the European model, at Moscow. His countrymen were proud of him, and his firm soon acquired consideration and importance, especially as Poschowsky never departed from the principle of extending his business and entering upon new speculations with such money only as had been realised by previous transactions. He began with importing drugs and dyes, and exporting furs and skins. By repeated journeys he became more thoroughly acquainted with the peculiar conditions of Russian commerce, and at all the great fairs he or his representatives attended to the interests of his firm. But he found himself greatly hampered by the Russian credit system; payments were deferred from one fair to the next, credit had often to be given for a year or more, while Poschowsky had to give his foreign correspondents cash or short bills. For this reason he was on the point of confining his transactions within narrower limits, when by the will of a rich relative he was left the handsome sum of 30,000 silver roubles. This enabled him to give his house that standing in the commercial

world which it had ever been his ambition to attain for it, and also to carry out a long-cherished project. Tobacco was then a somewhat new article, which, however, was becoming daily more in request, and Poschowsky foresaw its unlimited future. He therefore introduced it to the public on a large scale, exporting it in enormous quantities, especially to Siberia, and taking in exchange tea, furs, and skins. He also supported the cultivation of the tobacco plant in southern Russia, and kept agents in the different tobacco districts, who had to give him immediate notice of the state of the crops, the rise and fall of prices, &c. When therefore in 1737 the crop proved particularly rich, and prices fell, Poschowsky made a bold venture. He invested half his fortune in buying cheap tobacco, which he laid up in store. The speculation was successful. In consequence of the low prices the tobacco planters in 1738 planted but little tobacco, and in 1739 the crop almost entirely failed, so that prices rose as fast as they had fallen. Now the moment was come for Poschowsky to sell; his stock rapidly disappeared, and is said to have yielded him a profit of 80 per cent. He now for some time confined his principal dealings to tobacco; and since by the proper treatment of the raw material its value may be doubled and trebled, he established the first tobacco factory at Moscow, which one year after its foundation gave employment to 200 hands. Thus Poschowsky was the founder of the flourishing tobacco industry of Russia, concerning which it may be stated as a noteworthy circumstance that in spite of the high degree of perfection to which Russia's neighbours, Germany and Austria, have raised the manufacture of tobacco, Russia

exports annually cigarettes only to the value of about 50,000 roubles.

Whilst at the present day there is such competition in trade, industry, and art, that he who wishes to rise above the crowd can only do so by devoting himself to some specialty, and working it thoroughly, such was not the case in the last century. There were few princely merchant firms; those that existed, therefore, were more able without risk to extend their transactions in opposite directions, as Poschowsky did. Passing beyond the frontiers of Russia, he traded on the East with Persia, and on the West with France.

A new and equally profitable source of speculation presented itself to him at the time of the Seven Years' War. When Russia joined Austria in marching against Prussia, the Russian commissariat was found well organised for those days. Poschowsky had undertaken to supply the wants of the army, which his numerous connections enabled him to do in a most efficient manner. His agents with General Fermor—who in 1758 had invaded East Prussia—however, were guilty of dishonest practices; and to inquire into these, Poschowsky undertook the long journey from Moscow to the Russian camp on the Oder. He arrived just in time to witness the total defeat of his countrymen in the battle of Zorndorf; and on his way home was taken prisoner

by the Prussians. But Poschowsky had become too important a personage in Russia to be long left in the hands of the enemy. He was ransomed for a heavy sum. He retained his appointment as contractor to the army until the end of the war, and is said to have netted a profit of 500,000 roubles during the seven years the war lasted.

The evening of life was approaching. Poschowsky enjoyed the esteem of his countrymen not only as a successful merchant, but as an upright and patriotic citizen, who, ever remembering that commercially he had risen from the ranks, was always ready to extend a helping hand to those who endeavoured by honourable means to raise themselves. But something was wanting to complete his own happiness—an heir of his activity, who might walk in his footsteps, and carry on what he had founded. He had married in 1738, but his wife brought him two daughters only, who married high officers of state, with no tastes for commercial pursuits. When, therefore, at the age of seventy, and in the year 1770, Poschowsky closed his eyes in death, the firm he had founded, and whose chief he had been for forty years, died with him. But even now the commercial world of Moscow remembers with pride the first Russian wholesale house and its noble founder, Paul Petrovitch Poschowsky.

ACROSTIC RULES.

1. A First Prize of £25, a Second Prize of £10, and a Third Prize of £5 will be awarded to the three persons who guess the greatest number of the fourteen Acrostics which will appear in *London Society* during the year, viz. in the Christmas Number for 1877, in the Numbers from January to December 1878, and in the Holiday Number.

2. The prizes will be paid in money, without any stipulation whatever.

3. If two or more solvers shall have guessed the same number of Acrostics at the end of the year, and so have tied for the Prizes, the Editor reserves to himself the right of determining how these 'ties' shall be guessed off.

4. Answers to the Acrostics must be sent by letter (not by post-card), not later than the 10th of each month, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *London Society*, at Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.'s, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C.

5. The answers should be signed with a legibly-written pseudonym, and the names and addresses of the prize-winners will be required for publication.

ANSWER TO No. XIV. (DOUBLE ACROSTIC).

1. V	A	M	P
2. E	I	S	T
3. R	U	N	T
4. B	O	A	Z
5. A	T	A	B
6. L	I	G	U

Explanatory Notes.—Light 2. Plural of Eisteddfod. 4. Jachin and Boaz. 5. A Moorish tabor. 6. Exodus xxviii. 19.

Correct answers to the above have been received from Aces, Alma, Araba, Bon Gualtier, C O M, General Buncombe, Incoherent, Kanitbeko, Mrs. Noah, Mungo-Puss-Tory, Shaftan, and The Borogoves—12 correct, and 3 incorrect.

Antagonist is credited with a correct solution to No. XIII. The answer from Frau Clebsch was received too late to be credited.

The result of the year's Acrostic-solving is, that Alma, Araba, Bon Gualtier, C O M, Kanitbeko, Mungo-Puss-Tory, and Shaftan have guessed every one of THETA's fourteen Acrostics which have appeared in *London Society*.

Next to the seven solvers who have tied come Caller Herrins, General Buncombe, Incoherent, Mrs. Noah, Pud, and The Borogoves with thirteen solutions each; Cadwallader, Elaine, Excelsior-Jack, Racer, The Snark, and Verulam with twelve solutions each; Antagonist, Beatrice W., Cerberus, Coup d'Essai, Croydon Cat, Hampton Courtier, H. B., and Roe with eleven solutions each; and Aces, Gnat, Hazlewood, Hibernicus, Manus O'Toole, Mrs. Dearhat, Non sine Gloria, Patty Probity, and Yours Truly with ten solutions each. Want of space alone prevents the record of many who have guessed fewer than ten acrostics, but who nevertheless are deserving of honourable mention.

A Special Acrostic is given below for those solvers who have guessed all the Acrostics, and it is suggested that if only three guess it the sum of the three prizes, viz. 40/., shall be divided amongst them; if two only guess it, the sum of the first two prizes shall be divided between these two, the third prize to be guessed-off with another Acrostic by the remaining five solvers. When the answers to the following Acrostic are forwarded, the Acrostic Editor will be glad to have the opinions of those solvers concerned upon the above suggestions.

SPECIAL DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

(For the Seven Solvers who have guessed the Fourteen Acrostics.)

THEY do it, certainly, but then

Perhaps they never may again.

1. The foremost place this fitly seems to claim.

2. Himself deceived, he scarcely was to blame:

Curtius his first, but what his second name?

3. City of statues this, of Eastern fame.

THETA.

Answers to the above, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *LONDON SOCIETY*, 188 Fleet-street, E.C., must be received not later than January the 10th.

1

LONDON SOCIETY.

FEBRUARY 1879.

A VICTIM OF FOLLY.

WHEN Alfred Standish was in Rome he acted pretty much as English people generally do when visiting the immortal city. And yet it might be better to say that he 'did' the sights in an American spirit, very thoroughly, but rather with an idea that they must be done, because it is the proper thing for a traveller to see everything in order to be able to talk about it afterwards, than from any more exalted motive.

Setting his appearance aside—for he was remarkably handsome—Alfred was an *average* specimen of humanity, who might have turned out *superior* to the ordinary run if in his career he had met with any of those checks and crosses which are thought to be so essential for the strengthening and development of human character. It had never been his fate to want anything, to really long for the possession of something impossible, unattainable; and it is a well-known fact that having every little wish or whim gratified, if not anticipated, has proved the ruin of many and many a disposition.

'That boy will be utterly spoiled,' were words often spoken during the placid sunny childhood of Alfred Standish. But natural amiability saved him from growing selfish, palpably selfish; no opportunities occurred for the exercise

of self-denial; and so, as he grew from boy to youth, from the age of puppydom to that of manhood, the world declared it to be a marvellous thing that he was *not* spoiled, and assigned to him a place amongst the foremost of society's demi-gods and darlings.

For beyond the fact of his being to a certain extent clever and accomplished, and handsome as a hero of ancient ballad or prince of fairy lore, Alfred was the possessor of a noble old country seat, a beautiful yacht, and money enough to indulge in a thousand extravagances, for which, however, his friends considered he had not any inclination. Before he was twenty-five it so happened that all his near relations were dead, those who would have been dear to him having gone while he was too young to feel their loss. He was singularly without encumbrances or responsibilities, free from embarrassments as his own fortune, thoroughly and, as match-making mothers lamented, much too hopelessly master of himself.

'Of course he will marry; such an excellent young man is sure to settle early,' had been prophesied since the time he was still at Oxford. But year after year passed on, and Alfred's name had never yet been coupled with that of any of the ladies who would so

cheerfully have resigned their liberty in exchange for his affections.

'But he only thinks of sport and art and travelling,' said Clara, with some chagrin—Clara, who rode across country, and was the only lady who had ever mounted the paragon's favourite hunter. And Maria, who had been a cruize, and even braved the perils of a storm in his yacht, was obliged to own that he lacked the virtue of susceptibility.

'How animated Mr. Standish looks talking about pictures with Laura!' mamma might think at dinner-time, watching her darling gushing about art; 'what a mistake it is to say that men only care for dollish creatures with no ideas beyond gossip and flirtation!' Alas for that fond parent's dream of Alfred's being won by Laura's knowledge of foreign galleries! Mr. Standish's attention in the evening would be as fully taken up by Julia's song as by Laura's conversation, and does Julia hope when her *bravura* is ended that she has completely cut out Laura? So she is destined also to disappointment. Mr. Standish is swooped upon by a little nonentity of a married woman, who tells him about her children, who have just got through measles, and he listens to her and sympathises, without even a shade of boredom on his face. He is an unusually and unaccountably invulnerable young man.

It may appear that the opening sentence of this story was utterly irrelevant; but such is not the case, and having digressed long enough we will return to the subject of Alfred's visit to Rome.

He had only been there once, and often thought he really must go again when he had time, although he remembered the place perfectly. He liked Rome ex-

ceedingly, had not been in the least disappointed, and the additional weight and experience of years were in favour of a second visit proving even more enjoyable than the first. Also he regretted that he had not purchased any pictures when going the round of the studios, his dread of overburdening himself with luggage having probably lost him the chance of acquiring much that he would like to possess. By degrees he became conscious of a feeling, whenever Rome was mentioned, that he had wasted some opportunity—he could scarcely realise what it was—and at last he got into a habit of saying that he should 'go to Rome next year.' Several winters, however, passed away, and something or other had always prevented his determination from being carried out.

It has been said that he could talk well about the places he had visited, but when he had to undergo an examination respecting his recollections of different galleries or studios he had seen abroad, despite an intelligent fluency of talk, he was inwardly aware that hardly any of the celebrated pictures or statues left such an impression on his memory as did one particular face that he had seen produced and reproduced in the pictures of a then nameless unknown artist, to whose studio he had been taken by some *dilettante* acquaintance. It was a little girl, with a Greuze type of face, and the same countenance had been portrayed in many different phases and stages of completion. The most finished and perfect painting was merely that of the little face distorted by a frown, the small full mouth pouting, and tears of anger standing in the large blue eyes. This the artist had named 'La Ragazzuccia.' The face was so pretty, such a

living piece of flesh and blood, the rough curly hair tumbling into the eyes, so like that of a naughty child, that it had taken Alfred's fancy immensely, and he would have bought it had it been for sale. But the artist had not seemed anxious to part with any of his pictures. He was at Rome, he said, almost as an amateur, and although subsequently many of his paintings were exhibited in London, and Alfred from time to time criticised and admired them, the rising R.A. was never associated in his mind with the reserved young artist of the Via Margutta. In reply to his questions concerning the little girl, whose features had been bestowed upon various subjects—a cherub, fairy, nun, in slumber, and even death—Alfred had only been able to elicit the fact that she was not a professional model. He wished the artist would not be so uncommunicative, but appeased his curiosity by the consolatory reflection that the original was in all probability very much glorified in her likenesses, and although he frequently saw the young girl's face in imagination, it was always as represented on the canvas, and a thought of ever seeing her in person never once entered his head.

How he did eventually meet her, and came to understand what it is to feel an all-absorbing interest in anything, is the subject of this story, the prologue whereof being told, we will proceed at once to the opening scene.

Bond-street on a rainy day. Far on in the month of March, and four o'clock in the afternoon; consequently a great number of people about, notwithstanding the weather. Mr. Alfred Standish, emerging from Truefitt's shop, finds a trifling difficulty in putting up a new umbrella before proceeding on his way.

If he had been steeped in debt, possessed only of an income so small that every farthing for the next few years belonged by rights to his creditors, he would in all probability have hailed a cab and been driven to Brook-street, where he was going to pay a call. It is said, 'Heaven tempers the wind to the shorn lamb;' what power is it, then, that bestows extravagant and luxurious tastes upon those least able to gratify them? Simply because he was rich, driving so short a distance did not occur to Alfred. He walked well, and his trousers were turned up; he also had on an overcoat; so that he would not bring mud or an atmosphere of damp into his friend's drawing-room.

Having mastered the new umbrella, he was debating whether to cross the road at once, or walk on a little way. There was a great concourse of vehicles in the road just at that moment; so he decided not to attempt the crossing, and turning abruptly to the right, his umbrella came in contact with that of another person coming the contrary way.

'Beg your pardon, sir,' said a good-natured female voice; then, as he politely said something about its being his fault, his eyes fell upon a beautiful little face with a shocked and rather pettish expression, and as the umbrella proceeded, with two girls sheltering beneath it, he heard a half cross and yet laughing exclamation of,

'Jane, that's the *ninth* you've knocked against!'

Alfred remained for a moment looking at the retreating figures. 'A young lady out with her maid,' he concluded, and the maid was not tall enough to carry the umbrella comfortably over her mistress's head.

'What a pretty face!' he thought

as he went on ; and he wondered who the girl was, whether he knew any of her elder sisters, or whether she was nobody ; then she passed out of his mind.

But only to be brought back to it in less than an hour's time. After he had paid his visit, and was returning down Bond-street on his way to his club, an acquaintance met him, and they stopped to speak. The pretty girl and her attendant, tearing themselves reluctantly from a fascinating shop-window, were again approaching Alfred. Jane had evidently become tired of knocking up against people, for the offending umbrella was furled, and the drizzling rain fell upon their unprotected bonnets.

Whilst they were still a couple of yards distant from him, Alfred saw the childish cheeks of the pretty girl become suffused with the deepest loveliest carmine, as some one in a cab passed, and took off his hat to her.

How he could notice so much in an instant of time, was a subject of wonderment afterwards ; but Alfred was as positive that the man in the cab was 'bad form,' 'a cad,' and a thousand other things, as he was conscious of feeling vexed at the girl's blush of evident delight at his salutation.

Possibly he might have forgotten both his glimpses of the lovely face, had it not been for the sudden sensation of jealousy that arose within him. Not that he reasoned thus with himself, for a man does not own to such trivial weakness as this unaccountable susceptibility to an attack of the green-eyed monster. He was, however, sensible of a great longing to know who this little *flâneuse* could be, to meet her again, become acquainted with her, and find her voice, her mind, and manner equal to her form and features.

And why, he even went so far as to ask himself,—why did he now, for the first time in his life, think like this ? Was it that his friends in Brook-street, a happy bride and groom, had told him that his life was incomplete ; that his chief duty towards himself, his name, and society in general, was to fall in love and marry ?

Of course he had given the subject of matrimony a passing thought occasionally, and he looked forward—a very long way—to a time when he should be calmly settled with a wife and family.

The Marias and Julias of his acquaintance would have dressed and sang and talked at him with double zest about this time had they known that Alfred Standish was at last beginning to find his life of passionless liberty and pleasure monotonous, unless they learned also that the hero was vaguely looking for one Greuze-like countenance, beheld only for a few moments one rainy afternoon, as he believed, and yet as strangely familiar to him as if for years and years he had gazed at it incessantly in his dreams.

The object of Alfred's admiration and her companion walked slowly up Bond-street, but the young lady's interest in the shops was considerably lessened after that salute from the cavalier in the hansom cab. They crossed Oxford-street, and then with a quickened pace soon arrived at their destination, a dismal-looking house in Welbeck-street.

'I'm very much obliged to you, Jane, for taking me for this pleasant walk. I should certainly have lost myself, and been obliged to take a cab, if I had gone out alone,' spoke the rosy little mouth, as its owner tripped up the steps and scraped the mud from her boots. 'O, are you going to open

the door?' she continued, as Jane produced a latchkey.

The maid explained that 'being the only one kept,' by which she meant that she was the sole domestic of the lodging-house, 'and missus being stout and objecting to stairs,' it saved trouble for her to possess the means of independent ingress; though, when gentlemen had the apartments, they liked to have the use of the key; so then, as there was not a second, Jane had to ring if she was sent out on an errand, and poor Mrs. Jones had the trouble of coming up-stairs.

Fortunately no one had been at the door during their absence to give the landlady occasion to repent having spared Jane to walk out with her young lodger, who went up-stairs and quietly entered the sitting-room occupied by her widowed stepmother.

A plaintive, rather captious voice, that evidently of an invalid, greeted her with 'How long you have been, Rita! You must be very tired. Are your feet wet? Now do make haste and change your dress. Don't come near me, love; I do so hate the smell of damp clothes.'

Margherita ran up to the floor above, and effected a thorough change in her attire, which occupied about ten minutes. On her return to the drawing-room she found a visitor with her stepmother, whom she was delighted to see.

'Giorgina! how enchanting!' she cried. 'How kind of you to come on such a wet day!'

'Madame Bertani is most good-natured always,' said Rita's stepmother. 'But, my dear,' she continued, addressing the visitor, 'I wish I could make you feel as I do about the child, until her relations pay her the attention due to her father's daughter—'

'You would make her lead the life of a recluse, and that is too bad of you, Mrs. Courtland!' the visitor broke in. 'Why not put her in a convent at once? I declare the dulness of England is destroying her—she looks thin and pale. And after all, supposing your fine Courtlands should refuse to acknowledge her, then she will only have wasted so much time, when she ought to be making the best use of her beauty. She might make a splendid match, if seen at once, before—'

'Excuse my English, and consequently stupid, ideas,' said Mrs. Courtland; 'but if I do not enter into your views it is because—'

'Because you are so proud, mamma,' said Rita impatiently. 'I wish you were not. Giorgina, I will tell you what it is—'

'Ahi!' cried Giorgina suddenly, stooping to arrange her tidy shoe-strings. 'This rosette is loose, and I wish to walk back if the rain holds up. Rita, you must sew it on for me. Mrs. Courtland, do you think it bad for the feet to wear high heels? You must own that a lifetime of unnatural *chaussure* has not spoiled my ankles.'

'Faultless, my dear,' replied Mrs. Courtland, smiling.

Rita did not perceive the tactics of their crafty visitor, and while her stepmother was giving Madame Bertani credit for good taste in desisting, the child only thought Giorgina might have made more effort to gain her point. The reason she had called that day, as Rita knew, was to try and obtain permission for her young friend to accompany her to a large fancy ball which was to take place in a few days at the house of an old artistic acquaintance of Rita's father.

Two or three words about the Courtlands may be desirable to

explain precisely the situation of the heroine of this little sketch.

Years ago Frederick Courtland, the younger son of a North-country baronet, had grown weary of society, his native land, and family; and without any quarrel, or the supposition of having gone to the bad, he merely disappeared, and was in time almost forgotten. He married a beautiful Italian actress, who died a few years after the birth of little Margherita, when the child was just old enough to share and sympathise in the wandering tastes and habits of her father.

Rita had been allowed to grow up pretty much as chance determined; and always being in an artistic atmosphere, never stagnating in one place for any length of time, she somehow managed to pick up an amount of knowledge, experience, and common sense that served instead of a regular education, and being bright and sweet-tempered as well as very lovely, *la Signorina Courtland*, even at the early age of fourteen, had inspired a hopeless passion in the breasts of several ardent southern swains, and, dowerless as she was known to be, Frederick had been asked for his daughter's hand as soon as she should be old enough to marry.

At the time when he was beginning to realise that the little girl was growing up, and likely to prove more of a responsibility, Frederick had a severe attack of fever, from which he never completely recovered. The thought of being taken away from his child, and the ineligibility of those whose desire it was to gain possession of her, determined him to make a second marriage. The lady he chose was a countrywoman of his own, possessed of no very special attractions, for she was no longer young, had hardly any money,

and was in bad health. But she had been kind to Rita before Rita's father made her acquaintance, and the child did not in the least dislike her, though she was unlike most of the people she cared for, particularly different from her dearest friend Giorgina, who was the only Englishwoman Rita was intimate with. For Madame Bertani, be it said, was English born and bred, and had been called Georgy Thomson before she ran away from school at Brighton with the Italian singing-master.

After Frederick Courtland's death, his widow, though sincerely grieved at his loss, was able to interest herself in laying schemes for making her stepdaughter acquainted with her father's relations. She wrote to the present Baronet, informing him of his brother's death and the existence of Margherita; but months and months elapsed, and no sign of recognition arrived. Then Mrs. Courtland decided upon coming to England to urge Rita's claims upon the notice of the family, feeling that she was becoming every week less fitted for the responsibility her husband had bequeathed her, and they had arrived about a fortnight before that rainy afternoon when Rita attracted the admiration of Mr. Standish. Their only acquaintance in London was Madame Bertani, at whose house Rita found plenty of amusement, somewhat to Mrs. Courtland's chagrin, as she considered the wife of an opera-singer scarcely the right sort of chaperon for her stepdaughter. But Giorgina was a good-natured well-meaning woman, and it would have been too hard to forbid the companionless girl to associate with her old acquaintance, even if Mrs. Courtland had been less inclined to like her than was the case. The invalid was really

rather fascinated by Madame Bertani. This Rita knew, and although the matter had been previously discussed, and Mrs. Courtland had shown herself more positive than usual in asserting her authority or influence, she had hoped that her stepmother's objections would be overruled, and that she would be allowed to exhibit herself at a certain ball in the bewitching fancy costume she had danced in so happily at the last carnival before her father's death.

She felt that her friend was very heartless when, after a few minutes' talk upon indifferent subjects, Madame Bertani rose to take leave, saying airily,

'Ebbene, Rita mia! When your grand relations acknowledge you, you must make them give a fancy ball for you. Meanwhile, as you are not to be there, I don't care whether the Moretons' is a success or not.'

'Don't you want the bow fastened on your shoe?' said Rita, with a lump in her throat and a misty look in her blue eyes.

'I think it will last till I get home, thanks,' said Madame Bertani. 'I hope I haven't tired you, dear Mrs. Courtland. Good-bye.'

Rita followed the visitor from the room, in order to accompany her to the door. 'I'm afraid you will have a wet walk; I suppose you have a cloak and umbrella,' she said rather stiffly, for she was a little cross at her friend's not having been more importunate.

But hardly were they outside the sitting-room, ere she found that her judgment had been too hasty.

'My dear, it's just altogether simple nonsense of your mother to prevent your going to the Moretons,' said Giorgina. 'I dropped the subject because it's no use worrying her; but *go* you *must*.

It will be gorgeous—nearly all artistic people, you know—and Captain Tomlinson is going to Ireland for two years the week after next, and you can hardly expect to do better than him, don't you know.'

The recent bow and smile from Captain Tomlinson, as he drove past her in Bond-street, had affected her sufficiently for the mention of his name to bring a lively colour into Rita's cheeks. Her friend noticed this even in the dim light of the narrow lodging-house passage, and feeling that her task of temptation would prove an easy one, continued:

'How much better a comfortable marriage *at once* would be for you, than waiting the pleasure of these relations of yours, who would much rather you had never existed, and who will snub you frightfully, unless the daughters are prettier than you, which isn't likely. O my darling child, I have set my heart on your being seen in your lovely "Folly" dress. Why, only think, Mr. Moreton might take it into his head to paint you in it; he has got several sketches of you, hasn't he? You might be in the Academy, and—'

'If I could only go! It is so dull with nobody to talk to in the evening. Mamma goes to bed at nine. I give her her sleeping draught and wish her good-night, and then I don't speak to a single being, except Jane the maid, till between nine and ten in the morning; and I get so tired of reading!' groaned Rita pathetically.

A triumphant look came into Madame Bertani's face. 'You know, dear,' she said, 'invalids get imbecile ideas into their heads, and it is best to humour them as much as possible; but it is pure rubbish to guide our own actions

according to their perverted views. Besides, Mrs. Courtland is only your stepmother, and you needn't have the same respect and all that as though she was a real parent. Now *be quiet* about this. She need never know about it. I'll call for you about half-past ten, you know. You can bribe the servant to let you quietly in when you come back.'

'Yes, yes ; Jane is such a nice girl!' broke in Rita excitedly, 'and she's got a latch-key!'

'Capital!' said the temptress ; 'then the thing is arranged. Kiss your stepmother, give her a few extra drops of chloral—'

'O, no, no! I can't do that. Don't you remember in *Faust*, when Margaret gives her mother a sleeping draught, it kills her?'

'I don't remember,' said Madame Bertani, whose acquaintance with *Faust* was merely through Gounod's opera. 'Well, I don't want to poison poor Mrs. Courtland, though I am being rather a Mephistopheles. However, my fanciulla Margherita, I shall let Faust Tomlinson know that you are coming, and tell him what your dress is, in order that he may wear something that will look well with you.'

With that she hurried away, for fear some qualm of conscience on Rita's part should upset the present satisfactory arrangement.

But Rita's conscience at this time was hard as a diamond, and the rather captious peevish mood of Mrs. Courtland helped to strengthen her in the resolve to enjoy herself when it was possible. During the next few days the prospect of the ball kept up her spirits and made her patient and docile in outward behaviour, and content to remain within doors when the inclement spring weather filled Mrs. Courtland with apprehension for the health

of her southern-born child. Consequently Mr. Alfred Standish was not again favoured with a sight of the lovely nymph in a waterproof, though he was always every day in Bond-street, and almost hoped for another vision.

The evening had arrived, and Margherita thought her stepmother more than ordinarily wakeful, and less disposed to move into her own room. Early in the day had the fascinating costume of gay particoloured satin, with its innumerable little jingling bells, been spread out on the bed up-stairs, and the helpful and willing accomplice, Jane, had braided the young lady's curly locks, so it would occupy only a brief time to transform excited rebellious little Rita into the most seductive semblance of Folly it would be easy to imagine. In this guise she was to finish a conquest she had already begun, and her fair cheeks flushed rose colour when she thought of Captain Tomlinson, and the admiration his every word and look betrayed towards her. It was a good thing to have a lover, such a tall one too, and assuredly it would be a triumph to be married at seventeen, to be able to act as she pleased, without the trouble of evading or defying her stepmother's authority. She was not particularly in love with Captain Tomlinson, but enamoured as every natural girl of her age is of a shadowy ideal lover, who becomes merged into the first man who pays her devoted attention. Before her father's death she had been too young to understand the way in which she was regarded, and indeed it had been more the familiar petting a pretty child receives than the devotion which falls to the lot of a beautiful girl. During the past year she had

lived so quietly that she hardly ever spoke to a stranger, and Captain Tomlinson happened to be the first person of the opposite sex whom opportunity threw in her way to teach her that she was charming. Happy, easily learnt lesson, heartless and ungrateful the girl who is incapable of a faint *tendresse* for the one who opens to her that path of knowledge. For at first she can only see before her a vista of beauty and brightness : there are thorns beneath the flowers springing up around her, but she does not think of them at first—how should she, ere she has stretched out her hands to gather the blossoms that invite her ?

‘You are feverish, Rita, and tremulous,’ said Mrs. Courtland anxiously, as she took her nightly cordial from the girl’s hand, and noted her flushed cheeks. ‘I hope you have not taken cold. Have you a headache?’

‘Not the least. I have coughed once or twice to-day, and my throat is rather dry, but I really am quite well. So good-night, mamma mia,’ said Margherita, kissing the invalid with somewhat more effusion than she usually displayed.

Mrs. Courtland looked sadly and thoughtfully at the retreating figure of her stepchild, who turned before closing the door behind her to assure herself that the sick woman looked comfortable, and inclined to drop into a convenient slumber.

The light from the little night-lamp was not so dim but that Rita noticed the expression of Mrs. Courtland’s face, and a momentary impulse urged her to confess or abandon her intention of going to the ball. But this good feeling was only transitory. She heard Jane’s substantial tread on the staircase without, and

she knew she was coming, as by agreement, to help her into her dress.

A quarter of an hour later, and she was creeping stealthily past the bedroom door, a large cloak concealing her fancy garb, and wrapped tightly around her to prevent the tinkling of her bells. Her excitement had in a great measure given place to nervousness by the time she reached the passage, where stood the admiring handmaiden with the front door ajar.

‘The cab’s here, miss,’ whispered Jane—‘that is, next door; I wouldn’t bring it right up, lest missus should hear. She had best not know anything about it. Here’s the latchkey; it’s perfectly easy to turn, and I oiled the hinges this morning. Lor, you do look lovely!’

Rita fixed the little peaked cap upon her head and shook it daringly; then wishing Jane good-night ran lightly to the cab, and was driven away. It had been finally decided that both going and returning she should be independent of Madame Bertani, but they were to meet in the cloak-room at the Moretons’, so that Rita would not be obliged to make her appearance *sans chaperon*.

It was a thousand years to the little girl ere she arrived at the artist’s house in Kensington, the distance seemed interminable; and she was so tired and listless when she joined her friend that it needed all the admiring badinage of Giorgina to make her feel that the time she had eagerly looked forward to was come, and that she was going to spend an entrancingly happy evening.

‘I’ve been here some time, and had two dances,’ said Madame Bertani, as she took Rita’s hand to lead her up-stairs and present

her to their hostess, 'but I came down again three times to see if you were come. The Captain's here. You're sure to see him, though the room is very full; his is quite the most striking dress here.'

Margherita soon perceived him, and with a thrill of horror: a devil with horrible horns and a long tail; no scarlet Mephisto of the opera, scarcely any more dreadful to behold than the hero himself, but a hideous 'Old Nick,' the nursery bugbear with whom naughty children are threatened.

He was talking with a buxom water nymph, and Margherita not knowing any one sat down by Mr. Moreton, who was very glad to meet his pretty little model again, and talk to her about the blithe old days in Italy. But she was far too noticeable and captivating in appearance to remain quiet very long; partners were quickly introduced, and she was soon dancing away unceasingly. Somehow it was not as pleasant as she had anticipated. She had nothing to talk about beyond the costumes, for she had no topics of conversation in common with those of the men she danced with; she had been nowhere, and knew less than nothing of what was going on in London; and an hour's dancing in that crowded gas-lighted room made her feel more weary than a whole evening had often done in Italy.

Her jingling dress attracted Captain Tomlinson's notice immediately, and as soon as he was free from the plump Undine, he hastened to engage her. In spite of her first shock at his appearance, Rita imagined that she would enjoy the dances with the enamoured Captain more than those with strangers; yet somehow, the compliments he paid her, though all that the vainest could have wished, did not quite

stifle a feeling that she would fain be away from all this, at home comfortably in bed.

I fear she did not exactly wish she had not come at all, and if she had been feeling quite herself the gay scene would have been more delightful than any previous dissipation she had experienced. But her head ached, her limbs felt heavy, and the dryness of her throat increased till it was positively painful.

'You are tired; let us miss this valse,' suggested Captain Tomlinson, after he had given her an ice; and he led her into an artistic little nook on the staircase, where blue china lined the walls, and a single *causeuse* for two occupants indicated plainly that only one couple at a time was intended to rest there and admire the Danish crockery.

Madame Giorgina on her way down to supper perceived them, and hoped secretly that the Captain was 'about it.' She lingered some time over her chicken and champagne, rather expecting that her little friend would come tinkling after her to confide the happy fact that she was Captain Tomlinson's *fiancée*. When tired of waiting, she returned to the ball-room. She was both surprised and disappointed at seeing the satanic Captain waltzing again with Undine, whilst Margherita was neither visible nor audible.

Giorgina, in her capacity of chaperon, was asked on all sides 'what had become of Miss Courtland?' and at last she began to say 'that the devil had made away with her.' This was after she had asked Captain Tomlinson where she was, and noted a certain confusion in his manner when he replied 'that really he couldn't say—dancing with some other fellah, most likely.'

But Margherita had danced

enough that evening, and for many evenings to come, she thought, as she was being jolted along the Kensington-road on her way home.

A feeling of dislike, of horror almost, had seized her while her admirer bent over her, speaking words which were no more than she had been expecting. She did not quite know what he had said; but her cheeks burnt as she remembered how very near his face had been to hers when she snatched her hand away from him and dashed down-stairs. The room where supper was going on was quite away from the entrance to the house, the servants were all occupied, and the hall, where impulse had guided her, was quite deserted. She had opened the door, and closed it silently and swiftly after her, before she remembered that she had not got her cloak. But she was far too anxious to make her escape to return for it, or feel any apprehension lest her stepmother should be disturbed by her bells as she stole up-stairs on her return.

'Carriage, miss?' inquired that blot in the constitution of entertainment which the growing wisdom and refinement of the age has not yet abolished—the noisy, officious, semi-insolent, wholly intoxicated linkman.

'I came in a cab; can I not get a cab?' fluttered Margherita, appealing to a policeman.

'Four-wheeled cab; four-wheeler!' bawled the linkman. 'Or a 'ansom, miss? Hope you've enjoyed yourself, miss! Remember the linkman, please!'

But the policeman protected her, and put her into the cab, which was close at hand, took the direction from her to tell the driver; and she curled up in the dingy corner of the rumbling vehicle, and burst into a comfortable relieving fit of weeping.

But she had not cried long, not enough to ease the burning weight of her poor giddy head, before the tears were arrested by a sudden concussion, as her charioteer bumped up against a lamp-post, and rolling unsteadily down from his box, staggered up to the cab-window to ask what street he had been told to go to. With a scream, being under the conviction that the driver's intention was to rob and murder her, Margherita turned the handle of the opposite door, jumped out into the road, and, not knowing which way to fly, ran into the arms of her supposed assassin, who, although not perfectly sober, was not sufficiently far gone to allow himself to be cheated of his fare.

'How dare you stop! I'll have you sent to prison. Help, help!' she called wildly, hearing footsteps approaching along the quiet street; and with a sensation that she must inevitably fall down in a dead faint, she sank upon the kerbstone, and for a minute became unconscious.

Two friends were walking down Queen's-gate, having quitted the same party in each other's society. It was a lovely night, and after the heat of the rooms they came from it was no hardship that they were not overtaken or met by an empty hansom immediately.

'I'd rather walk if you'll give me a weed,' said the younger of the two. 'Thanks,' as Alfred Standish provided him with what he desired. 'Hullo! that gentleman has had his supper,' he added, as a cab passed them, making rather serpentine progress.

'Drunk as a fiddler. I say, look out!' ejaculated Alfred, as the vehicle pulled up as we have described; and the two friends had already hastened their pace just

as Rita's appeal summoned them to her aid.

'What a lark! a lovely female in distress!' cried the other young man. 'And Jove! what have we here?' he added, as the distressed damsel, recovering herself, rose tinkling to her feet ere the knight-errant could lift her up.

'O, thank you for coming; but I think he is only tipsy. I will give him some money, and let him go away.'

The beautiful troubled countenance, with the tears still wet on the long eyelashes, was lifted towards Alfred, whose companion, meanwhile, took upon himself to reprimand and dismiss the cabman.

'Do be quiet, Percy. I tell you I know her. At least—' this was a rapid aside, cutting short Lord Percy Trevor's somewhat free-and-easy manner of addressing Rita, whom he not unnaturally took for some burlesque actress who had not changed her dress before leaving the theatre.

'Will you wait here till one of us brings another cab?' Alfred continued, ardently hoping that Percy would behave properly, and like a friend allow *him* the privilege of staying to guard this realisation of his dream. In springing from the cab, Rita had given a little twist to one of her ankles, and it was the pain of this, almost as much as her agony of terror, that had caused her to turn sick and faint. She had confided to Alfred her fear that she could not walk, but after a few moments the pain subsided and she felt able to proceed.

'Only I don't know the way,' she said. 'I have no idea where this is, or how far from my home. But, gentlemen, I shall walk so slowly. Pray, pray do not wait for me. I am not frightened. If you will tell me if Welbeck-street is near—'

'It is more than two miles, and you are going away from it!' exclaimed Percy; 'but we can find a cab of course.' Then he whistled shrilly and, as it proved, successfully, for in a few minutes the rumble of wheels was heard, and a hansom was within hail.

'I'll look you up to-morrow about twelve, shall I?' Percy asked, taking it as a matter of course that Alfred would escort this extraordinary young lady of his acquaintance to her destination. As for Alfred, the line his friend adopted assured him that his first impulse was not a wrong one, namely, to see her safely home. But Rita was urgent in protesting that she had received quite enough assistance from them, and would far, *far* rather that they let her go alone; and it would only have been impertinent and intrusive not to have yielded to her desire.

So Percy comported himself, as he afterwards declared, like a respectable father of a dozen wild daughters, took the number of the cab, and impressed steadiness and civility upon the driver, informing him of the accident which had just occurred.

'O sir, I fear the other gentleman is paying him money!' cried Rita, in a half-offended agony, her quick ears catching an intonation of gratitude in the cabman's voice as he swore to obey the young man's behests.

'No, indeed, madam! Really, I wouldn't take such a liberty,' said Percy. 'Only you know unfortunately by your recent experience that his species are not always very civil, and I have merely told him to behave himself, and hinted that, if he did so, you might possibly tell your servant to give him an extra sixpence when you get home.'

'How much ought I to give

him?" asked Rita, looking with her baby blue eyes into Alfred's face as he leant upon the wheel of the cab. 'I paid three shillings to the man who drove me there; the maid where I am lodging told me that was the right sum. But I have more than that—at least I hope I have;' and she felt in the pocket of her short rainbow skirt. 'O, yes!' and a look of relief took the place of a momentary shade of anxiety. 'I have not lost my purse or the latch-key.'

'You are not being sat up for, then?' said Percy, thinking to himself that it was a most extraordinary want of gallantry, and more than slow of his friend not to insist upon taking a romantic moonlight drive with this lovely little mountebank.

'No,' said Rita, feeling herself blush, 'I am not. So,' she added, with a little laugh, to pass off her embarrassment, 'it is a good thing I have not lost my key, or I should have had to wait on the doorstep till the milk arrived.'

'No, the best plan would be to ring and call out "Sweep!"' said Percy. 'That is the earliest morning sound where I live.'

'But in this dress,' said Rita very seriously, 'I should be afraid to call out. Any one passing, or looking out of window, might think—I don't know what. London knows nothing of carnival. But is three shillings money enough, or should I pay him more as it is so late?'

'The man will be perfectly satisfied if you give him that,' said Alfred, taking her last words as a dismissal, and closing the cab-doors.

'I thank both of you, gentlemen, a thousand times,' said Margherita, bowing gravely, while the little bells on her fantastic headdress tinkled.

'We are honoured at having been able to serve you, though only in this slight manner,' replied Alfred, drawing his friend away.

'Good-night, sirs.'

'Good-night, madam, good-night;' and the cab drove off, leaving the two young men to stare after it for a few moments before they put on their hats again, ejaculating simultaneously,

'Well?'

'Well!'

Percy's was the interrogative. 'Have the goodness to explain,' he continued, taking his friend's arm as they walked on.

'I can explain nothing,' said Alfred.

'Nothing! Why? O, but hang it all, you said you knew her!'

'I have seen her, that is all. I saw her in the street one day, and have not got her face out of my mind ever since. I am sure I have seen it before—in a picture, or a dream—'

'How very romantic, to be sure!' laughed Percy. 'But what a blessed old St. Kevin or Senanus you were to resist a *tête-à-tête* drive! But, poor little sinner, I don't believe she meant you to go with her, though in general a woman's *don't* is *do*.'

'I'm glad you think that, Percy, very glad; and although appearances—'

'O, bother appearances! Mrs. Grundy is in her dotage in this advanced latter half of an enlightened century. Girls do go about unchaperoned occasionally, and this one is all right—a lady I mean, don't you know. Where was the ball?'

For, during the minute or two that Percy had been calling the cab, Rita had hurriedly explained the reason of her strange attire.

'O, don't, please!' cried Margherita, as the exemplary driver,

having actually got down from his seat, prepared to ring a lusty peal at the door-bell, while the numerous little emblems on Folly's dress continued quivering after the cab was still.

'Not ring! Very good, miss. Thanks, the gentleman has paid me,' he said, assisting her to alight.

'Then I shall pay you also,' said Rita, with dignity, though she could have shed tears of mortification. As if the whole evening had not been failure enough, without the additional humiliation of being under a pecuniary obligation to a total stranger!

She opened the door and entered, creeping cautiously up to her own room. The gray dawn peered coldly in through the window-blind, there was no need of a light to undress by. In a few minutes the gay costume lay in a tumbled heap upon the bed, and its shivering, heavy-limbed, unhappy little wearer was sobbing herself into a slumber of exhaustion.

The next few weeks passed like some confused dream with Rita. A time came when she seemed to lose the consciousness of suffering, and felt as if she were being wafted off into a vast infinity far away from those faces that had bent over her in her sickness. Those were familiar faces that had tenderly watched at her bedside—Giorgina's, Mrs. Courtland's, Jane's; but there had been others besides, phantom figures that she raved of in her delirium, sometimes with a shrinking kind of loathing, while now and again little expressions of courteous gratitude would come from the fevered lips, and her eyes would smile and glisten, as though with pleasure.

'Have I been *dangerously* ill?' she asked at length, when she woke up, and realised to her aston-

ishment that her stepmother was standing by her side.

'Yes, darling,' was the reply; 'but, thank God, you are out of danger now.'

She had no strength to ask any more just then; but by degrees, and from different people, she learnt how Jane, coming to her with a cup of tea on the morning after that terrible night, had found her moaning, and only half-conscious, had undressed and put her properly to bed, and gone off for a doctor. Then how Giorgina had called to find out what was the reason of Rita's sudden disappearance, and, being allowed to go into the sick-room, had been alarmed by her friend's illness into confessing what had happened—that is as far as she was able, for only Rita's rambling words could give the real clue to her odd behaviour in leaving the ball, or hint at the greatest adventure of that eventful evening.

Margherita, in deep contrition, spoke of her wrong-doing and all its consequences, whilst she was still too weak to be treated other than gently and indulgently; and then she was told that during her fever her relations had come to town, and held communication with Mrs. Courtland. They seemed to be a very kindly sort of people, and not ill-disposed towards the poor little upstart, and Lady Courtland had expressed a gracious desire that, as soon as she was sufficiently convalescent, Rita should migrate from Welbeck-street to Grosvenor-place, in order to become acquainted with her cousins.

'I feel so thankful about this,' said Rita's stepmother, with tears in her eyes. 'Now, when I am taken, I shall die in peace, thinking that you will be properly cared for. It rests with yourself to win your relations' hearts, and you are

always loved. Then, under Lady Courtland's charge, you will be sure to make a good marriage.'

Margherita, lying feeble and listless on her pillows, could not refrain from shuddering as she recalled her recent views respecting a marriage. Captain Tomlinson's gaze of bold admiration seemed again to be bringing the hot blushes to her cheeks, and in fancy she once more enacted that wild escape from his embrace, her dangerous spring from the cab; and then her two preservers seemed before her, and she allowed her vivid imagination to stray off into surmises whether she would ever meet them again, and if they would recognise her, should they see her in rational costume.

She so often let her thoughts rest upon this question that it betokens no mesmeric affinity of souls that, at the very time when she was thus musing, a plan for making her acquaintance was being laid before Alfred Standish, which accorded with his ideas of chivalry and decorum. Percy had suggested many wild and romantic schemes from the very first, but each had been scouted in turn; so that at length he declared 'it was no use trying to help a fellow on, and that he should leave his friend to his own unassisted devices.'

Had he fulfilled his threat, it is probable that Alfred would not have seen his beautiful ideal for many months, and it is also likely that, if chance threw her again in his way, she might have been married, or at least engaged to another man. However, Percy was too much in the habit of interesting himself in his friends' concerns to let the matter drop, as he believed to be Alfred's intention.

It would take too long to enter into details, and I must pass over many things, only briefly glancing

at a few of the measures that were adopted.

Rita had no opportunity of speaking confidentially with her faithful accomplice Jane until her escapade was a thing of a month ago, and half forgotten by the others, who thought that the terrors and annoyances of that night must have existed to some extent only in her fevered imagination. But one day, when Mrs. Courtland was quite worn out with nursing, and had gone down to her own room, Jane sat in charge of the invalid, and Rita went over the whole story. The maid looked all excitement during the narration, and at the close exclaimed, with wide-open eyes,

'Well, I never! And to think that missus should just have happened to answer the bell instead of me!'

Rita asked what she meant, and the girl proceeded to relate how that, on the day after the ball (some time in the afternoon it was, when she, Jane, had been despatched by the doctor to get a prescription made up in a great hurry), two gentlemen on horseback had called, and asked if the lady was quite well after her accident in the cab.

The excellent Mrs. Jones, having heard nothing of any accident, and being ignorant of the fact that her front door had been left on the latch all night, informed the gentlemen 'that they must have made a mistake in the house—that no one had been at a fancy ball from there—that her only lodgers were two ladies, both invalids now, poor dears, and neither of them likely to go out, except in their coffins.' For the landlady was of a melancholy disposition, and inclined to take the most hopeless view of matters.

'I think it was very polite of them to call,' said Rita, feeling a little shame at the memory of

Percy's having deceived her about paying the cabman. There was also a faint sensation of disappointment at the way things had turned out; she would have liked to have heard who the young men were, and she would very much indeed have liked them to learn her name, and know that she was respectably connected. The opportunity was lost for ever of explaining the whole circumstance, or paying Percy what she felt she owed him.

Jane did not mention—for indeed it had utterly slipped her memory—that one morning a hansom cabman had driven slowly past, looking at all the houses, as though in search of a particular one whose number he had forgotten, and, seeing Jane cleaning the doorstep, had respectfully addressed her, and asked if she would tell him the names of her mistress's lodgers. Jane complied with his request, thinking nothing of the occurrence; for the man merely thanked her, with a disappointed expression of countenance, supposing 'she could not oblige him by saying at what number an old gentleman of the name of Johnson lived?' Nor would it have occurred to Rita that this was a little piece of amateur detective business; for she did not remember the appearance of the man who had driven her to Welbeck-street, though the faces of both Alfred and his companion were vividly before her.

But Percy considered a great point gained when he had learned the name of Alfred's 'Folly,' and the business of discovering the house in Kensington where a fancy ball had taken place that evening was not very difficult.

'Now, you old duffer!' he cried one morning, bursting into his friend's room, 'you'll go to Rome now, won't you, just when

the heat is getting intolerable, and look for some one to give you an introduction to Miss Courtland?'

Alfred coloured. 'It was a wild-goose idea, of course. I never really entertained it. I must wait patiently; very likely I shall meet her somewhere some day. But have you picked up anything fresh? How is she? Tell me that, if you know.'

'The servant-girl won't talk to the chemist's young man. He thinks she loves a policeman, but there are too many of the species in London to settle which; moreover, it's a risky thing to corrupt a servant of the Government; besides, I think we can do without. But you want to know if she is better. Pills supposes so, as there are fewer and different prescriptions to make up. And now for my business, you slow-pulsed, nineteenth-century, unardent wooer! Read this first, and then this;' and he produced a couple of letters, watching the expression of his friend's handsome face as he perused them.

The first was this:

'Gainsborough House, Kensington.

'Mr. Moreton presents his compliments to Lord Percy Trevor, and will be happy to allow him to visit his studio any Tuesday from three to seven o'clock.'

The second caused greater excitement:

'Grosvenor-place, Monday.

'Dear Lord Percy,—Of course we perfectly remember meeting you three years ago at Spa, and are only sorry chance has not sooner afforded an opportunity of renewing so pleasant an acquaintance, but we have been so little in town. In answer to your questions about my husband's niece, I have very little doubt that she is the same Miss Courtland whom your friend knew in Rome, as her

father always lived abroad, and her mother was an Italian. However, Margherita is now paying us a visit, and we shall all look forward to seeing you and your friend Mr. Standish. I enclose cards for my first evening this season, and hope to see you then, if not earlier.

'With kind regards, sincerely yours,

'ELEANOR COURTLAND.'

'My dear boy, what have you been doing?' cried the bewildered Alfred.

'Well, I told a cram or two; but all's fair in love, don't you know, and if they come to cross-question me, I shall have made a mistake, and been too officious, or something of that sort. But we'll go and call, and you can pretend to have seen la Margherita in Rome, as well as her portrait. Or if you are too conscientious, you can stick to facts now we have gained the *entrée* to her friends' house, and the girl will be less than female if she is not flattered at the pains you have been at (per deputy) to become introduced to her. O, as for that one,' Percy continued, anticipating a query of the other's about Mr. Moreton's note, 'I showed you that first because it leads up to Lady Courtland's, don't you know. When I found out that there had only been one fancy ball within reasonable cab-distance of Queen's-gate (where we fell in with "Margherita," if you remember), my first business was to obtain admission to the said house. So I wrote an effusive note about my great admiration of Moreton R.A.'s pictures, and humbly asked if he ever admitted the vulgar public to his studio. I received this answer, and acted upon it. Moreton is a very nice fellow, and has got such a jolly house. He took

me all over it to show me his collection of china and Old Masters; both very valuable, at least he says so, and I didn't tell him I knew nothing about either. Well, I was wondering how I could introduce the subject of his fancy ball, when Fate arranged the matter most splendidly for me. We entered a fresh room, and suddenly my attention was arrested at the sight of one particular picture. I struck an attitude, and, like the fellow in *The Tapestry Chamber*, ejaculated "'Tis she!" It was a picture of a little girl, with rough hair, and tears in her eyes, and a sort of enchantingly naughty expression—'

'Not "La Ragazzuccia"?' cried Alfred.

'Yes; some such name as that he called it. He had painted it, he said, in Rome some years ago; but it was "Margherita" all the same, bar the difference of costume. I fell into ecstasies about it, said I had seen her, and wondered who she was; and he told me all about the little creature. She has hardly a rap of her own, and is going to live with her relations, the Courtlands, very good people, whose acquaintance I luckily remembered making at a *table d'hôte*. You'll get on splendidly with them, and of course they'll be glad enough to persuade the little girl to accept you, supposing you are not disappointed in her when you meet her again. O my, won't there be desolation in some tender breasts when it is known that you have been hooked?'

'My dear fellow,' said Alfred warmly, 'I have heard of friendship and unselfish devotion, but it is difficult to imagine it possible for any one to have done all this for another man—a fool who never would have thought of half the things you have done. Percy, you have fallen a victim like

myself to that girl's exquisite face !'

'Blessed if I have ! *Pas si bête* —at least, I don't mean to speak disparagingly of your innamorata, but I assure you I am as incapable of being inspired with a romantic passion, or love at first sight, as you would make a fellow incapable of friendship,' replied Percy. 'No, believe me, I have managed this from pure love of a lark, and I shall be amply rewarded by witnessing your wedded bliss, and hearing all the envious disappointed ones picking Miss Margherita Courtland to pieces.'

This story would never have been written had it ended differently from Percy's expectations, and therefore it is hardly necessary to say anything more. But in consideration of the young man's

meritorious services, it is only just to add that he experienced no disappointment in either respect. Alfred and Margherita were a very happy and satisfactory couple, and Percy was amused to find that much of the popular admiration of Alfred Standish had been transferred to himself since the appearance of the lovely Miss Courtland in society. He had the candour, however, to avow that he was only becoming a favourite because he pretended to condole with those who lamented Alfred's sudden infatuation, as a mad freak of fancy, as a wild dream from which he would one day awake only too sadly, and he often delighted in bringing a bright colour to the pretty cheeks of Mrs. Standish, by speaking of her husband as 'a victim of Folly.'

A WISH.

FAIN would I clasp that soft brown hair
 Between my hands, and o'er that brow
 Breathe forth to God a heartfelt prayer
 To keep thee ever good and fair,
 To guard thee ever safe from care,
 As thou art now.

S. E. W.

ON BEING KNOCKED DOWN AND PICKED UP AGAIN.

A Consolatory Essay.

GREAT deal of human life consists in the simple operations, mentioned in our title, of being knocked down and picked up again. This is a process constantly going on, both in a physical and a metaphorical sense. Life is full of ups and downs. Properly speaking, we cannot have the one without the other, as we cannot have up-hill without down-hill. Naturally, we prefer the 'up' to the 'down,' and would probably prefer knocking down other people to the converse operation of being knocked down ourselves. The gentleman who committed suicide, on the high ground that he objected to the absurd and constantly recurring practice of dressing and undressing, ought to have had more of those serious ups and downs of life, which have sometimes been enough, with a better show of reason, though not with the reality of it, to drive better people to self-

destruction. If one were using a Butlerian mode of argument, it would be proper to say that this uncertainty is so certain, that want of uniformity so uniform, that they are part of the very plan and structure of human life. To be always 'up' would be something monstrous and abnormal. When Amasis of Egypt found that the island despot Polycrates was always successful, that when he cast his priceless ring into the sea it was brought back in the fish captured by the fisherman, he renounced all friendship with him. He knew that it foreboded no luck at the last. And he ingeniously argued that if he made a friend of Polycrates he would certainly have to endure considerable mental anguish through the misfortunes which would happen to his friend. He used rather a pretty expression, indicating that life was a kind of tracery, a blending and interlacing of shadow and sunshine. Of course this way of looking at human life might be treated on the method either of weeping or laughing philosophers. Most sensible men are content to take together the rough and smooth, the bitter and sweet. They know that these things make the man and the athlete. Beaumarchais beautifully says in his *Memoirs*: 'The variety of pains and pleasures, of fears and hopes, is the freshening breeze'

that fills the sails of the vessel and sends it gaily on its track.' I heard a man say once, that he had had great trials, and with the blessing of heaven he hoped to have some more of them. It was a bold expression, perhaps an overbold, but still he saw into the kernel of this mystery and problem of reverse and misfortune. Sometimes the knockdowns are so continuous and so stunning, that they tax all our philosophy to understand them, or even be patient about them.

Let us first look at the plain, prosaic, practical, and somewhat pugilistic force of the expression. The earliest education of an ancient race consisted in shooting, riding, and speaking the truth. I am

afraid that the last item is very much falling out of the modern fashionable *curriculum*. We may take the intermediate department as an illustration. We must all have our tumbles. Every man learns to ride through a process of tumble continually repeated. Who ever learned to ride except through continual falls, or to fence except through continual buffetings? The other day, I was reading Mr. Swiles's *Life of George Moore*. It is a little too much of the Gospel according to Hard Cash. Mr. Moore had neither chick nor child, and he invested a large portion of his wealth in philanthropic and religious munificence, which yielded him immense social returns. Bishops and judges flocked around

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the dry-goods proprietor, who seemed made of money, who bled gold at every pore. I do not say that he was not a good and sincere man, but the worship of the golden calf was comically mixed up with the whole of it. But how this man George Moore worked in order to accumulate money! He had for a partner a man called Copestake. He led the wretched Copestake an awful life. Copestake worked away in a little room over a trunk-shop. For many years together he never took a

day's holiday. He went through awful anxiety in providing funds for the enterprising Moore. Mr. Moore worked quite as hard. He spent the week in very sharp practice, and on the Lord's Day he balanced his accounts. 'I never took a day,' he says, 'for the first thirteen years during which I had to travel.' All this work, in the long run, did not fail to act injuriously upon his health. Lawrence, the great surgeon, gave him some sensible advice: 'You had better go down to Brighton, and

ride over the downs there; but you must take care not to break your neck in hunting.' And now Mr. Moore had to learn the acrobatic art of tumbling. He had to combine the two objects of learning to ride, and of not breaking his neck. In a sort of way, he was constantly being knocked down and picked up again. Dr. Smiles records the Gilpin-like adventures of his monetary hero. 'He had some difficulty in sticking on. He mounted again, and pushed on nothing daunted. Wherever a jump was to be taken, he would try it. Over he went. Another tumble! no matter. After a desperate run he got seven tumbles.' Mr. Moore thus sums up his experience: 'Whatever other people may say about riding to hounds, I always contend that no man ever rides bold unless he has had a few good tumbles.' This had been identically his experience as the Napoleon of commercial travellers. *Lector benevole*, we must learn to tumble gracefully. Half the art of the bicyclist is to learn how to tumble. We must become used to being knocked down, and even appreciate it—like the eels, which are said to have a partiality for the process of being skinned—and learn to come up smiling, after a sponge, for the next round.

How often we find a man saying, 'I was fairly knocked down. I bore a good deal as I best could, but the last straw breaks the camel's back. The fatal letter came. The fatal telegram came. It told the bitterest truth. It confirmed the worst fears. I was knocked down.' We have heard of persons who have had the very worst tidings. They have died upon the spot. The feeble heart has given way. The overwrought brain has given way. The blow was so sharp and sudden, that none

other was ever required by the Fates. The victim was slaughtered where he stood. 'If thou faint in the day of adversity thy strength is but small,' and, alas, the strength has been small indeed.

Thus it may be in many cases. But it is not so in the case of those who, in the struggle for existence, are destined to survive, and who 'rise refulgent' from the stroke. With stricken hearts and wandering wits they contrive to pull themselves together. Look at military history. The whole story of success in war consists in the capacity of men being knocked down and picking themselves up afterwards. This is the moral of that famous seventh book of Thucydides, which Dr. Arnold loved so much, which showed how the invaded became the invaders, and the Athenians were overcome on their own element. This is the way by which the Romans obtained the supremacy of the world. Englishmen have never known when they have been beaten. Prussia became the steel tip of the German lance through a series of knockdowns. Read Carlyle or even Macaulay's short essay, to see how Frederick the Great lost battle after battle, campaign after campaign, before he consolidated his glory and his kingdom. See again how, when Prussia was brought to the lowest point of humiliation in the Napoleonic wars, at that very point the star of the nation began to rise. There is a proverb to the effect that Providence is always on the side of the big battalions. This is not always the case, as witness the fields of Marathon and Mon-garten and Morat. It is quite conceivable that there have been times in a nation's history when a defeat has been more valuable than any victory, when the knock-

down has been essential to any getting up worthy of the name, when the disaster has laid deep and firm the foundations of future victory. I am one of those Englishmen who are never tired of reading about the battle of Waterloo. I can hardly tell how books have been written from the stately simplicity of the Wellington despatches to the misleading legends of M. Thiers and M. Victor Hugo. What has impressed me most, has been the awful reticence of the Duke of Wellington, the way in which he held back the impassive masses that seemed doomed for massacre, whether forming square or deploying into line, in both a moral and a military sense submitting to be knocked over until the hour comes to be 'up and at them.'

We see this law pervading all history. When Troy fell, according to the Virgilian legend, its banished citizens reared a mightier city on the Tiber. When monarchy was threatened in Portugal it revived in Brazil. Great Britain, compassed by inexorable limits at home, revives beyond the seas in the Greater Britain which girdles the globe wherever the English tongue is spoken. Pitt thought the star of England was lost in the fierce light of the sun of Austerlitz, and had rolled up the map of Europe in despair; but only a short time before he had met at the house of a common friend with a young officer, that Arthur Wellesley of whom we have just spoken, destined to pluck the eye out of the French eagle which had soared and screeched above so many a red battle plain. How often has the country 'been in danger,' 'brought to the brink of ruin,' 'going to the dogs.' And what has been said of the country has been said pretty well of every family that goes to make

up the country. But somehow men keep on.

The getting up again is the rule through all our modern life. We turn the shattered line, fill up the breach, if necessary march to the ramparts over the bodies of our slain comrades. If there is an explosion in a pit we clear away the *débris*, human and mineral, and the excavation is renewed. If an opera-house is burned down we build up another. If a railway scheme collapses, if there is really anything to go upon it surely revives again. When old St. Paul's was burnt down it is said that a single column survived, on which was engraven the word 'Resurgam.' Which thing was an allegory; we do, in fact, rehearse our Resurrection whenever with fortitude and unconquerable purpose we look forward to it. Read such stories of heroism as we find in modern exploration, in Governor Eyre's walk across the Continent of Australia, for instance. Look again at the wonderful narratives of exploration in Africa, from the north, from the south, from the east, from the west. We Englishmen played the first part, but a very good second has been scored by Germany. English people, however, are hardly acquainted with the work of Nachtigal and Schweinfurth, Rolfs and Krapf. The great merit of Stanley is that he never knew himself conquered; as often as he was knocked down he picked himself up again. Those fights, day and night, with some thirty tribes of savages, and worse fights with some thirty raging whirlpools of waters, are fine examples of indomitable pluck. But in the whole history of human activity, in every department in life, wherever there is true vitality, the knockdown is rather disciplinary and restorative than any absolute defeat. How often in

youthful days we heard the story of the defeated Scottish king who watched the spider that failed half a dozen times before it achieved its object, and so took heart of grace and proved a conqueror at last. That is the most celebrated spider in all entomology. In commercial history, which abounds with so many materials of adventure and romance, we see the case of good and honourable men who have been plainly forced by the fates to give in, who have had to endure the loss of property, and that still more precious and valuable commodity, credit; and yet many of these men have singularly retrieved their shattered fortunes and built up great houses on a firm and durable basis. Look again at the history of inventions. Every great invention has only been perfected by repeated disappointment and through long processes of experiment. Calmness and patience are now the main characteristics of the scientific and philosophic temper. It expects disappointments, and it gets them, and knows that they are instruments of advance and means of verification. The record of all success is simply the record of failures. Alchemy gave us chemistry, and astrology gave us astronomy. Men wanted the philosopher's stone, and Providence gave bread, the true bread of scientific discovery and solid advances in the realm of nature. The same thing is constantly to be seen in science. If science sustains a defeat it is only a provisional defeat. The defeat itself is a step towards victory. Every scientific man moves slowly from point to point searching into that wisdom which has been hidden that we by searching might find it out.

I was reading in a book of travels the other day something

about Dr. Collis Browne, the well-known inventor of chlorodyne. He was a staff-doctor, unattached, and was determined to wrest from bare matter some secret that should prove useful and lucrative. His first experiment was quite unsuccessful. He had an idea which came to nothing, but which may yet be developed, of having chest-protectors which should be filled with inflated air, and thus protect the chest from the outer air. The inventor is described as 'busily employed cutting out strips of macintosh with a huge pair of scissors, and gluing them together with some preparation which he was heating over the fire in a pipkin, the whole room being strewn with his materials, and the furniture in a general state of stickiness.' Mr. Lucas says in his work (*Camp Life and Sport in South Africa*), 'He went on I know to many other ventures before he hit upon his grand discovery of chlorodyne, which ought to have made his fortune. Whether it turned out to be of any substantial benefit I do not know. We can venture, however, to give a little light upon this inquiry. After many chemists had declined having anything to do with the venture, one was found sufficiently enterprising to take the matter in hand, and we believe that the inventor and the chemist who gave currency to the invention now share some ten thousand a year between them. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same story may be told of the great majority of successful men. Most of them will probably say that taking their failures with their successes they have been almost as much indebted to the one as to the other.

'No matter; he who climbs must count to fall,
And each new fall will prove him climbing still.'

It is to be observed that the condition of success is that *we keep on at it*. 'It's dogged that does it,' as one of Mr. Trollope's homely characters justly observes. No limit is to be placed, as long as life lasts, to the power of recuperation and the capacity of action. The old legend is constantly being exemplified, that men as they fall kiss their mother earth, and rise strengthened by the embrace. When Sheridan failed in speaking in the House of Commons, he said that he knew he had it in him, and was deter-



mined that it should come out. A still greater man than Sheridan, Lord Beaconsfield, made a yet more conspicuous failure, which he has redressed with far more splendid successes. We think of poor Sir Walter Scott, in his old age, overwhelmed with debts which he had not himself incurred, and nobly clearing them off at the rate of ten thousand a year by his pen. I do not know whether he formally cleared off the debt, but he stands acquitted in the last verdict of his generation.

Perhaps, my young friend, you

have had some terrible knock-down. You really think that you must lie on the ground, and let any one trample on you who has a fancy for that operation. You have been refused by the girl of your heart. Your right wing is broken, and you will never be able to fly as long as you live. It may or may not be a very serious matter. Only this I say, that I know many men who would very gladly have been refused if they knew all which they came to know afterwards. I know many, too, who when they see their old loves rejoice exceedingly that that tremendous knockdown blow of a rejection was duly administered to them. You have been dismissed from a situation, or you have lost some appointment for which you have been trying. These are truly serious things, and I do not wish to underrate their gravity. Still, the world is a wide one, and there is plenty of space to allow you a perch in it. I have an idea that if a man does not get on in one place, it is just a sign that he will get on better in another. If he does not succeed in one profession, it is because he is better adapted for something else. Perhaps you have been plucked at college. This is no doubt a serious matter, but still not so serious as it was in my time. There are so many more examinations, and the standard of the examinations is so much raised. The young men, who used to be in disgrace and despair at a pluck in my time, now take the matter with callous coolness. Very good men have been plucked, and followed up their pluck with a first class. I indorse the old-fashioned theory, that no one is born into the world without having a place assigned to him which will give him a livelihood and credit. Then, again, the extreme

case arises of impaired health, and the enforced shutting up of the ordinary avenues of distinction. This blow seems of a decidedly knockdown character. But it is not necessarily so. Some of the greatest of this world's children have been invalids. Macaulay draws a fine contrast between that 'asthmatic skeleton' William III. and the crooked humpback who led the fiery onset of France. How nobly Alexander Pope sang throughout 'that long disease his life.' That amiable and clever

novelist Mr. Smedley wrote charming stories descriptive of that active existence in which he himself could take no part. When limited by corporeal barriers, the mind has always seemed to work with greater strength and freedom. Thrown upon itself, it seems to gather up its resources with a firmer grasp. Some of the loftiest thoughts and loveliest pictures and sweetest songs have come from those for whom the world seemed to have no place.

The moral history of the phrase

might be written at great length. I do not know whether biography would help us very much, because biography is tainted with insincerity and onesidedness. In these days every eminent man has his biography written, in which he is represented as a faultless monster, and former intimates smile at the imposture upon the public. But look at the biographies of those men who have solemnly unveiled the secrets of their lives, and have shown how they have struggled against the mastery of

some overwhelming vice. Weak natures that swim with the stream, which have never sought to counteract the imperious tendencies of evil, can hardly understand the terrific life-long conflicts of many natures, the repeated knock-down, the despair, the apathy, the remorse, and then once more the rising up again, the renewed conflict, and perhaps the renewed defeat, or the ultimate victory, won with such scars and haunted with such memories. There has been what a recent author happily

calls a 'black drop in the blood'—some defect of nature, some taint of character, some transmitted or acquired evil. And how to exorcise this evil principle has been the terrible life-long problem. You see this conflict in the writings of the greatest saints, such as Augustine and Luther and Calvin; in those, too, who are all other than saints. It is like the picture of the Devil playing with a man at chess for his soul; it is Faust and Mephistopheles over again. Our Laureate traces this out in his conception of Lancelot, his awful conflict with the tyrannous passion which overwhelmed him:

'His honour rooted in dishonour stood,
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true.'

We remember the final despairing soliloquy heralding the dawning of the better mind:

'So mused Sir Lancelot in remorseful pain,
Not knowing he should die a holy man.'

And this is seen in some more of Alfred Tennyson's delineations. King Arthur reproaches the faithless knight Sir Bedevere that he had twice failed, knocked down by the force of temptation, and recognises that he may yet rise again:

'Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl,
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence;
But if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands.'

Here the wise and merciful king recognises the possibility of a man being knocked over, and yet being picked up again. And we are reminded of Him who said, 'Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.'

Let us look a little at the process of being picked up again. As a rule a man is left to gather

himself together as he may, to pick himself up as he best can. As a rule no wretch is so forlorn that he has not some friend who will act as a 'Judicious Bottle-holder,' will plant him on his feet again, and whisper the consolatory remark that he should go in and win. Probably, however, he is left alone on the spot where he was prostrated. If he writhes, wriggles, and makes contortions, this will be a source of considerable gratification to the bystanders. This will be a favourable opportunity for administering a British kick to the recumbent form. A celebrated writer concludes the preface to his work by the remark: 'Should the toe of any friendly critic be quivering in his boot just now, I would respectfully submit that there could not possibly occur a better opportunity than the present for kicking me *de novo*, as I have been for months very ill, and am weary and broken.' Some other pickings-up are thrillingly interesting. The soldier waking from his swoon on the battlefield under the quiet stars, recognises his wound, and tries to stagger to his feet. It is an even chance whether he is helped by surgeon or comrade, or knocked on the head by some camp follower for the sake of the pillage. As we go along the waysides of the world, we constantly meet with those who are robbed and wounded and lying half-dead, and—the heavens be thanked!—it may often happen that a good Samaritan, in some guise or other, is coming in the very direction where he is most wanted. I know that public opinion in the present day is strongly in favour of letting the wounded traveller alone, and of watching, with enlightened curiosity, whether he will pick himself up or bleed away. The kindly

race of the Samaritans—I who write these lines know it well—have not yet been improved off the face of the earth. There are still good men and women who, like Howard, tread ‘an open but unfrequented path to immortality.’ They are ‘angels unawares.’ They adorn humanity. They keep alive in men the seeds of goodness and the hopes of heaven. There is no nobler sight in the world than a good man coming to the help of a good man. He will first satisfy himself about the necessity before he inquires about the goodness. He will not depute his personal duties towards the suffering to the tender mercies of a Charity Organisation Society. As he cannot go to heaven by proxy, he will think that he cannot do his work on earth by proxy. If I see a fellow-soldier overthrown in the dust and turmoil of this battle of life, I will not leave him to pick himself up, but I will try and pick him up myself. I will ease him of his accoutrements, I will bring him a morsel of my bread, and

water for his feet, and he shall rest within the shadow of my tent. His lot may have been mine yesterday, and may be my child’s to-morrow.

There are just a few good people who actually go about the world picking people up whom they find upon the ground. For my part, I prefer the adventures of the Brothers Cheeryble to those of Haroun Alraschid. This can necessarily happen to very few of us. It is much if we can now and then help a man on the roadside; it is given to few to go out and search for them. The secret of Rousseau’s influence, as M. Louis Blanc pointed out at his centenary lately, was that he took the side of the *âmes damnées* of the earth, the poor, the weak, and the suffering. What the two Frenchmen hinted sentimentally, there are many who have carried out practically. Such lives leave a luminous track behind them, and remind us of those Arms of infinite pity and power which are ever stretched forth to raise and bless us.

A DAY ON GUARD.

Looking back over times long past and gone, my thoughts reverted the other day to the following episode in my life, which I will here jot down as well as my memory will allow me. The scene is Rangoon, the time the middle of the year 1862.

Within a few yards of one of the numerous broad roads which intersect the cantonment there stood a group of buildings of the type then, and for all I know now, prevalent in British Burmah, that is to say, wood floor and posts, walls of bamboo plastered and whitewashed, and thatched roof. Of this group one small building served to accommodate an officer, and another and larger one close to it some twenty men; the whole forming a guard that mounted there daily.

Rather more detached, and surrounded by a high bamboo paling, stood another building, raised nearly six feet from the ground on posts, and accessible only by steps. A few outhouses or 'godowns' complete the group towards which I, then a young subaltern, and the guard, of which I am in command, are marching in the early morning. We arrive opposite the guardroom, find the old guard drawn up to receive us, and the preliminaries of the ceremony known as 'relieving guard' are duly performed. We—that is, I and my predecessor on duty—then 'fall out,' and exchange a few remarks on the current station 'gup' or gossip, after which he observes, 'Come along; I must hand you over your charge.' We

two then proceed to the enclosed building, and mounting the steps find ourselves inside an apartment about twenty feet square, almost devoid of furniture, and dimly lighted by a couple of half-closed wooden casements.

Two women, natives of India, rise from the floor, where they had been sitting, and survey us with an indolent nonchalant expression, as if this was a visitation to which they were pretty well accustomed; which indeed was the case.

In the far corner of the room, and dimly visible in the semi-darkness in which it was enveloped, lay what appeared to be a bundle of dirty cotton rags. Pointing to this my companion observed, 'There you are; and now I must be off.' I, not unnaturally, make a slight protest against this summary mode of handing over that for which a guard of an officer and twenty European soldiers was considered essential; for so still and motionless was the object—whatever it was—that it might have been merely a heap of linen awaiting the offices of the 'dhobie.' But the only answer I receive is, 'Can't help it, old fellow. I hand him over precisely as I received him; and as we are strictly forbidden to molest, or even to touch him, you won't make things any clearer if you stay here for a fortnight; so come along.'

We descend again to the front of the guardroom; the relief of the old guard is completed, and it marches away, leaving me in

charge of something that I have not so much as seen !

But it is time to enlighten the reader as to what this something really was. That bundle of dirty cotton rags covered the withered helpless form of an old man nearly ninety, whose name and titles, as given at full length by the historian of the Sepoy war, were Aboul Mozuffer Suraj-oo-deen Mahomet Behaudur Shah Padi-shah-i-gazee, ex-king of Delhi; and last, but not least, the Great Mogul himself! Here was *sic transit gloria mundi* with a vengeance! Often as I had seen the good man's effigy on the wrappers of the cards wherewith I used to beguile my evenings, I never expected we should meet in the relative positions of gaoler and captive. Often as I had, when witnessing the guard mounting at St. James's Palace, imagined what a fine thing it must be to be intrusted with the honorary safe-keeping of a sovereign, it had never occurred to me that I should one day be responsible for the actual custody of an emperor.

But how came he here? To answer the question we must go back a few hundred years.

The first of the Moguls who figures in Indian history was the great Tamerlane, who, in 1398, overran Bengal, captured Delhi, and fixed upon it as his seat of government. But he never completed the subjugation of the country; other conquests and designs called him away, and it was reserved for his descendant, Zahir Eddin Mahomet Baber to complete what Timour had begun, and to be the founder of the Mogul dynasty in India in the year 1519.

Baber died in 1530, and was succeeded by his son Humayun, whose reign was one long series of struggles against foes from within

and without, to preserve and consolidate the empire of his father.

He died in 1556, and was succeeded by Akbar, who is styled the greatest and wisest monarch who ever ruled in Hindostan. At his accession he merely ruled over the Punjab, Delhi, and Agra. At his death the Mogul empire extended from Hindoo Koosh to the borders of the Deccan, and from the Brahmaputra to Candahar. His toleration of different religions, his humane and liberal policy to his subjects, and his encouragement of literature and science, are sufficient to render his name memorable, and seem to have marked him as a man far in advance of the times in which he lived.

After a brilliant reign of fifty years he died in 1605, and was succeeded by Jehangir. About this time our countrymen begin to appear upon the scene. The motto, 'Primus in India,' cannot apply to us as a nation; for the Portuguese had discovered the route by the Cape in 1498, and had established a settlement at Cochin in 1502. But where lucrative traffic was being carried on, the irrepressible Briton could not be far off; and accordingly after a successful private expedition in 1591, we find a company called the East India Company formed, with a capital of 30,000*l.* in one hundred shares, which company, after being granted a charter by Elizabeth, humbly solicited permission from the court of Delhi to trade with the different Indian princes.

We read that although the first commercial adventures of the company were small, a profit of from one to two hundred per cent was realised; a result which, to say the least of it, must have been gratifying. Imagine the effect of such a dividend in these degenerate days!

James I. addressed a letter to

his 'illustrious brother the Mogul,' commending the British merchants to his care. Men who could make a profit of between one and two hundred per cent might well be objects of solicitude to their monarch.

In 1611 the company obtained permission from Jehangir to erect factories at Surat, Ahmedabad, Cambaya, and Goga; and in 1613 he issued a firman confirming their possession of them.

In 1615 Sir Thomas Roe made his appearance as the first English ambassador at the court of Delhi.

In 1627 Jehangir died, and was succeeded by Shah Jehan, during whose reign the power and prosperity of the Moguls attained their height.

His dominions were well governed, and enjoyed almost complete tranquillity; in fact Khafi Khan, the best native historian of the time, says that, 'although Akbar was preëminent as a conqueror and law-giver, no prince who ever reigned in India could compare with Shah Jehan in good administration of every department of state.'

This prince evidently cultivated the well-known Oriental love of pomp and display; the splendour and magnificence of his court and its surroundings being a proverb in the East to this day.

It was he who constructed the celebrated 'peacock throne,' so called from its resemblance to the tail of a peacock spread open, and represented in its natural colours by rubies, emeralds, sapphires, and other jewels, the whole being estimated at the value of six million pounds. It was he who built the beautiful city of new Delhi or Shahjehanabad; and it was he who reared the world-renowned Taj at Agra, in which he and his queen were buried, and which is

unsurpassed in beauty, alike of design and construction, by any building in Europe or Asia.

It is a striking proof of the wealth and prosperity of the Mogul empire that all this was not purchased at the cost of heavy taxation or of debt. The finances during this reign were never otherwise than flourishing, and the people were happy and contented.

The last years of Shah Jehan's reign were embittered by the strife among his four sons for the succession. At length Aurungzebe—the third—succeeded, after a combination of treachery, talent, and violence, in deposing his father and murdering his three brothers in 1658. Shah Jehan lingered in confinement at Agra till death released him in 1665. Meantime the English had not been idle. In 1639 Fort St. George was founded, and in 1652 the Madras Presidency was established. In 1662 Bombay was ceded by Portugal to England. Aurungzebe, who oppressed and persecuted the Hindoos, seems to have regarded the English with favour; for he sent to compliment them on their brilliant defence of Surat, when attacked by the Marhattas in 1664, and granted them further marks of his favour. Emboldened by success and prosperity, the foreigners soon began to grow presumptuous; and at length the Mogul was so offended at their growing insolence, that he vowed he would drive the whole race into the sea. He took Surat, and laid siege to Bombay. But the English were soon brought to their senses, and recognising at once that the time had not yet arrived for resorting to force, 'stooped to the most abject submission,'* and thus averted the threatened danger. Aurungzebe

* *Mill's India.*

contemptuously restored Surat, and reinstated the English in their trade. Poor men ! they were so few and had come so far, that it could matter little to the Great Mogul whether they stayed or not.

But towards the end of the seventeenth century the tide of the Mogul power began to ebb. Aurungzebe, as he grew old, alienated the affections of his subjects by his tyranny and suspicion. His last years were spent in misery, caused by the conduct of his sons, who, following the example he himself had set them, were incessantly striving among themselves for the deposition of their father, and their own succession. He died in 1707, and in him died the last capable Mogul monarch. Blow after blow now fell on the tottering dynasty. In 1723 the Decan, and in 1730 the Mahrattas, obtained their independence. In 1729 the Persian host, under Nadir Shah, invaded Bengal, captured Delhi, and after signalling their triumph by a shocking massacre of its inhabitants, returned, bearing with them plunder to the amount of 120,000,000*l*. Meanwhile, the English, who had outstripped all their European competitors in India, were rapidly increasing in power ; and the result of the now inevitable struggle between the Mogul empire under a succession of effete and incapable monarchs, and the East India Company, represented by such men as Clive, Hastings, Coote, Wellesley, and Lake, could not be long doubtful.

Shah Alum II., or Shahzadah, who succeeded to the throne in 1759, spent several years in fruitless efforts to reunite the scattered fragments of what had been the Mogul empire ; but was compelled in 1765 to throw himself for protection upon the British, who

assigned him the city of Allahabad as a residence, receiving in return the formal cession of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa. He made an ineffectual attempt to recover his independence by means of an alliance with the Mahrattas, who quickly turned upon him and imprisoned him in his late capital of Delhi. The capture of that city by Lord Lake, in 1803, again liberated him, and he was allowed to exist as a pensioner of the East India Company, with an annual allowance of 120,000*l*. He died in 1806, and was succeeded by Akbar Shah, whose sovereignty was purely nominal. In 1835 the currency of India ceased to bear his effigy. He died in 1837, and was succeeded by the subject of this memoir, then past his sixtieth year.

Little more remains to be told. In the ordinary course of events he might have finished his days at Delhi, with no higher ambition than to obtain an increase of his pension, or to secure the succession of his empty title to his son.

But when the terrible mutiny of 1857 broke out, the revolted sepoys flocked into Delhi from the adjacent stations, and proclaimed his restoration to the throne of his fathers.

Although his age and infirmities rendered it doubtful whether he had taken any active part in the mutiny and its accompanying atrocities, his name alone was sufficient to serve as a pretext for the acts of those who cared little for the moment who was ruler, provided the hated Feringhees were exterminated.

Accordingly, when Delhi was stormed on the 14th September, the first care of the British was to possess themselves of the person of the aged monarch, who, with a crowd of terror-stricken followers, had taken refuge in the tomb of

his ancestor, Humayun. Never was the capture of an emperor effected under such extraordinary circumstances. No successful rival surrounded by his adherents, no victorious general at the head of his troops, was there to demand his sword; the handful of conquerors was scattered far and wide over the vast city they had just captured; and a single British subaltern rode to the entrance of the tomb, and dragged forth the last of the Moguls from among the cowering multitude that dared not lift a hand in his defence.

Let the historian of the sepoy war describe the scene: 'So Hodson went forth and stood before all, in the open space near the beautiful gateway of the tomb, a solitary white man among so many, awaiting the surrender of a king, and the total extinction of a dynasty the most magnificent that the world had ever seen. It was then but a title, a tradition; but still the monarchy of the Moguls was a living influence in the hearts of the Mahometans of

India. And truly a grander historical picture was rarely seen than that of the single British subaltern receiving the sword of the last of the Mogul emperors in the midst of a multitude of followers and retainers, grieving for the downfall of the house of Tamerlane, and the ruin of their own fortunes.'*

After his capture he was tried by a court-martial, and sentenced to transportation for life, Rangoon being chosen as his place of exile. He died there on November 11, 1862, and beneath the shadow of the Golden Pagoda lie the remains of the last of the Great Moguls.

But while I have been moralising, my tour of duty has passed, the measured tramp of footsteps announces the approach of my relief, the bundle of dirty cotton rags is again handed over, and I march back to my quarters, pondering over the strange vicissitudes that brought about my day on guard.

* *Kaye's Sepoy War.*

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MRS. LANCASTER'S RIVAL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS IN HER OWN CHATEAU.'

CHAPTER V.

UP THE RIVER.

KATE NORTHCOTE was a woman of a very hopeful nature, and when she walked down that afternoon with her nephew to the quay, she had dismissed all troublesome fears, and thought of nothing but the pleasure of having him with her again.

All was quiet in the hot afternoon: the fishwomen were sitting in the shadow of their houses; the tide, nearly full, was plashing gently against the great stones and the rusty chains. A blue hot stillness lay on the scarcely-moving water; the air was very clear, and every touch of colour shone out brilliantly. The boatmen had not forgotten Dick; they came down one by one to speak to him. They all knew his aunt, too, and had a rough sort of bow and a smile for her. The waterside people counted Miss Northcote among their few friends. She was not afraid of speaking to them, and they knew that what she said was always true. Several boats were at Dick's service, and he chose one belonging to Matthew Fenner, a son of the old man in the lane, a fine quiet-looking young fellow, who had married the wrong woman, and thus had made life a harder struggle than it need have been. Sometimes his wife was too much for Matthew, and drove him to spend a day or two in the public-house; after these experiences he

would sneak down any back alley to avoid meeting Miss Northcote, and hearing what she thought of him. To-day he came forward frankly enough, smiling quietly when he met her eyes, and carefully arranged a cushion for her in the stern of his boat. Dick took his place there too, thinking it would be hot work pulling, and he might as well arrive at Pensand cool. Matthew took the oars, the most picturesque of boatmen, with his long black beard, round straw hat pushed back, and dark blue jersey, and with a few strong strokes brought them out into the river. Away from the quay, the first thing they passed was St. Denys Combe, wild, romantic, and lonely, though so near the town. One or two rocky paths and a narrow lane led down into it, and old trees grew picturesquely on its steep banks, hanging over the rocks where St. Denys people loved to sit on summer evenings, when the tide was full. From the upper windows of Miss Northcote's house, and of several other houses on the brow of the hill, one could see right down into the Combe, and people who went there to read Tennyson or otherwise pass their time were apt to forget this.

Then the boat passed along the shore, under the cliff, till it swung round to the right, into the Penyr, a stiff bit of rowing, as Dick remembered very well. Pulling up the stream of the Penyr, with its

strong currents, was also hard work. They advanced slowly, even with Matthew's strength of arm, but Miss Northcote was quite satisfied. She had not rowed up here for years, and the beauty of the banks was a delight to her. On the left bank were wild steep cliffs, sometimes thickly clustered over with trees, sometimes shelving down with stony faces to the water. Over the wildest of them ivy hung and trailed gracefully, and here and there they were broken into small red fields, or a cottage with its bright garden was couched among the ledges. On the right bank, thick shady woods crept down to the beach, with sunny breaks which gave a glimpse of green park sward. Kate loved the left bank best, her St. Denys side, the purple rocks with their embroidery of springing wild flowers.

Some way up the river they came to the mouth of Pensand Combe, and had to pass carefully in between the sandbanks. There were a few gray scattered houses at the mouth of the Combe, built along a narrow lane which skirted it. There was the mill, of which Anthony Strange had told Mabel, a mass of rough stone building, clothed with the ivy and moss of years. Under its rugged wall the great black wheel was working, and sending out a rush of green and yellow water into the stream.

Then the Combe grew narrower, and the trees came down and hung over it, while the Castle above seemed quite close; then the boat had glided on, right up into Pensand, where the fishing-boats were pulled up on the beach, and the children were playing in and out of them, and another rushing mass of water came pouring out of the low arch under the second mill. Matthew

Fenner ran the boat ashore a little below this; his passengers got out, and set off to walk up to the Castle. When they reached it, Miss Northcote rather tired with toiling up the hill, they found the drawing-room empty. But Dick, looking out of the window, was aware of somebody in a low chair not far off, in a shady corner of the lawn. The butler, apparently, did not know she was there, and was gone away in some other direction to look for her. Dick pointed her out to his aunt.

'Rest yourself,' he said. 'These chairs look promising. I'll go out and fetch her.'

Mabel was sitting turned away from them, with her face to the view, and a book in her hand, which she had taken out of the small drawing-room. She was a little tired, after the morning's walking and clambering, and was inclined to be quite happy. It seemed as if life in such a beautiful place could never be wearisome. It seemed too as if from morning till night she would have nothing to do but to please herself. Dick's step on the grass, a very different one from the General's, disturbed her suddenly from her enjoyment of book and view. She looked round, and saw him standing close to her. Poor little Mabel! It was so unexpected, and her heart gave a jump of joy. Then she remembered how bad he was, how much she ought to dislike him, and that first glad feeling changed itself into a cold shiver.

Dick, not the most penetrating of mortals, was only aware that she started up, dropped her book, picked it up again before he had time to interfere, lifted her eyelids slowly, and looked at him with nothing but surprise.

'I did not know any one was there,' she said. 'How do you

do? and she put out a stiff passive little hand.

Dick wondered how he could have mistaken her for a school-girl of fifteen or sixteen. Miss Ashley, small and helpless as she looked, was certainly grown up. He was piqued by her manner, and wondered what it meant.

'I was so anxious to know how you were after the journey,' he said, 'that I brought my aunt up at once to see you. She is in the drawing-room. You are enjoying Pensand?'

'Yes, thank you,' said Mabel. 'It is very good of Miss Northcote. General Hawke said she would come and see me.'

She went at once towards the window, a little in advance of Dick, who followed her in anything but a pleasant state of mind. He was not a person to be looked down upon, and treated as nobody. What did she mean by it, and where was all the friendliness of yesterday flown to? She certainly could not know what she was doing—making herself quite at home with a man one day, and treating him the next as if she had never seen him before. Or rather, as if she had some reason for being angry with him, and keeping him at a distance.

'Well, she need not be afraid,' said Dick to himself. 'I shall not persecute her.'

Miss Northcote saw at once that something was wrong, but could not make out what it was. She was amused, however, at the pity Dick had expressed for this girl, who seemed to her quite contented, quite self-contained, and capable of fighting her own battles. If there was a shade of restless unhappiness, now and then, in Mabel's look, it vanished, to Miss Northcote's further amusement, when General Hawke came into the room, and began to talk

to Dick. He and his ward were evidently on the best of terms.

Miss Northcote and Dick were equal to the occasion, which was that of finding themselves not quite so welcome as they expected. She felt a little angry with the General, and he with Mabel; but in her, good temper and good manners alike kept any sign of this from being shown, and as to Dick, he was only a little more talkative than usual. General Hawke, remembering him a rather dreamy boy, was surprised at the liveliness with which he described his station life, and laughed heartily at some of his anecdotes. Kate exerted herself at intervals to talk to Mabel, who had not very much to say in return. Her visitor did not take any fancy to her, and thought her an odd-mannered little thing. Once or twice she caught her eyes fixed upon her rather curiously. Kate's beauty was not of a kind to strike a girl who could be much impressed by Mrs. Lancaster's: it perhaps needed an educated mind to understand her air, her unconscious grace, the perfection of all the lines about her. Kate was the modern expression of an old race, which had been distinguished in courts and wars for many hundred years. Flora Lancaster was a lovely animal. I speak of their looks, not of their minds, for I do not wish to be hard on Flora without good cause.

General Hawke, as I said before, had a very strong admiration for Miss Northcote. His eyes wandered towards her many times as he listened to Dick, and when tea came in, and was set down near Mabel, he got up, crossed the room, and took his place beside her.

Dick got up too, and came forward to make himself useful at the tea-table. His wish to have it out with Mabel had been grow-

ing all this time, till it was stronger than his discretion. The General was a little deaf, and he and Miss Northcote seemed quite occupied with each other. Dick, as he stooped to take his aunt's cup from Mabel, gave her a look that the stupidest girl could not have misunderstood, but the like of which she certainly had never received before. Dick had very good expressive eyes; they were the best feature in his face. They asked Mabel very plainly what he had done to offend her; what was the change from yesterday; and a good deal of reproach and sadness, more, perhaps, than he quite meant, added to the effect of the question. Mabel only answered it by blushing crimson, drooping her eyelids very low, and putting a lump of sugar into the cream-jug instead of the General's cup. This was not unsatisfactory to Dick, and confirmed him in his resolution to know all about it. At any rate it was not mere indifference. Having handed the cups, he came back and sat down near Mabel, and said something about their journey the day before.

'What has become of your *chaperon*?'

'O, I don't know; she is somewhere,' said Mabel. 'She is going back to-morrow morning.'

'Then you will be left alone?'

'I shall be with the General,' said Mabel.

'To be sure.' Dick was silent for a moment or two; then he went on: 'You must get the General to take you down the river in his boat. You have no idea how jolly it is. Make him land under those woods I was telling you about yesterday.'

'Has he a boat?'

'Of course he has. It is kept down in the Combe. These summer evenings, after dinner, the best thing he could do.'

'I don't know whether he would like it.'

'Certain to like it, isn't he, if you ask him?'

Mabel shook her head and smiled. Dick was pleased at having softened the grave little face at last.

'This is a charming old place, isn't it?' he said.

'Yes; and I believe it really was built by the Britons; for Mr. Strange was here this morning, and said so.'

'Of course. He told me all I know about it. So you have made acquaintance with Anthony! Isn't he an odd fellow?'

'I don't know. I think he is wonderfully nice.'

'So he is. There is not a better fellow on this side of the world. I am very glad you like him. You will like Mrs. Strange too, and Carweston perhaps better than either of them, if you like places better than people.'

'But I don't.'

'Are you sure about that?'

'I don't know what you mean,' said Mabel rather coldly.

She was determined not to enter into any jokes with Dick, or to let him be in any way intimate. He had no business to trouble himself about what she liked or did not like. She meant him to see, at any rate, that she disapproved of *him*. It was rather hard, with his easy manners, and those laughing dark blue eyes watching her all the time. It seemed to become harder every minute, for General Hawke was inconsiderate enough to take Miss Northcote out on the lawn to show her a rose, before Dick and Mabel had finished their tea. It would perhaps have been unreasonable to expect a New Zealander not to seize this opportunity.

'May I hope that you have forgiven me?' he said, as soon as

the others had stepped out of the window.

'I have nothing to forgive you,' said poor Mabel, in a low voice. She tried to be cold and stiff, but her distress was very evident.

'O, I thought you seemed vexed when I appeared, and unwilling to talk to me. I thought I must have offended you, though I could not imagine how. But I suppose I was dreaming,' said Dick.

'Yes, you must have been,' said Mabel, looking away towards the window.

'There is something, though,' said Dick, half to himself. 'Miss Ashley, when we parted at the station yesterday we were very good friends. Have I done anything since?'

'Nothing—of course not. Don't say any more about it, please.'

Mabel felt as if she could bear this no longer. She would not look at him. She got up suddenly and followed the others out on the lawn. Dick waited a moment, and then walked after her. He did not address her again; and when, a little later, his aunt said it was time to go, he wished her good-bye in a manner as grave and restrained as her own.

'Your little fellow-traveller seems quite at home, Dick,' said Miss Northcote, as they walked down the shady avenue.

'I can't make her out at all,' said Dick hopelessly. 'Is it affectation, do you think? She is not the same girl who was in the train yesterday, telling me all her troubles. She has dressed herself in buckram. There is something in it that don't satisfy me at all.'

'I daresay the General has something to do with it,' said Kate. 'He has been telling her that a girl in her position must not make friends with stray young men.'

'What position, pray?'

'The position of seventy thousand pounds.'

'You don't say so! It never occurred to me till this moment that she had anything at all. What an unworldly fellow I must be! O, well, if she is a stuck-up little heiress that explains everything. The General need not be afraid; I never would hang up my hat in my wife's hall. I only hope he won't marry her to Randal.'

'Excuse me, Dick,' said Miss Northcote, beginning to laugh; 'but I had no idea it was so serious. I thought it was all pity for an unhappy child of about fifteen.'

'She is quite grown up; you were right there,' said Dick rather bitterly. 'Well, she doesn't want us, and we won't think about her. If the General is good to her it is all right.'

'Very well. So much for Miss Ashley. I only envy her one thing—living at Pensand. What glorious ferns!'

'You should see them in New Zealand,' said Dick.

'Come, I won't have the old country cried down. I never saw anything much lovelier than St. Denys. I won't have my illusions destroyed by you.'

'It was only size I meant.'

Dick was hardly in his usual good spirits. His aunt was rather glad when they reached the boat to see him pull off his coat and take up Fenner's extra pair of sculls. He rowed with great energy, and the boat flew through the water. They were not long in pulling round to St. Denys.

None of them spoke much. Miss Northcote, as she sat in the stern, would have enjoyed a much longer row. It was very pleasant to hear the water splashing gently, to see the birds dipping into it, and the colours deepening and

brightening as evening came on. Dick, too, as his strong frame bent to the oar, as he tossed back the hair that fell over his brown forehead, was not—cross as he might be—a bad object for the eyes to rest upon.

CHAPTER VI.

A VISIT TO FLORA.

DICK went to church with his aunt on Sunday morning. There he saw Mrs. Lancaster again, sitting in the front row of the choir, and was obliged to confess that she had gone off very little in those ten years. Her complexion was not quite so blooming, but Dick thought the extra refinement made up for that, and she certainly dressed much better. In fact, she looked very pretty and elegant, and no one would have imagined that she belonged to her rough old sailor father, who sat half-way down the church, bristling with red and gray whiskers, and growling the responses, quite out of time and tune with everybody else.

Miss Northcote and Dick were overtaken by these two, as they climbed the hill on their way home from church. Flora was passing on with a bow, and a smile for Dick at the end of it, but old Cardew stopped to shake hands with him.

'Well, Mr. Northcote! You've come back more of a man than you went, if one may judge by appearances.'

'I hope so,' said Dick.

'Yes, he does credit to New Zealand, Captain Cardew, does he not?' said Miss Northcote.

'Good-morning, ma'am,' said the Captain. 'I hope you're well. The best thing you can do for a young fellow is to send him to the other side of the world. No-

thing like it for breaking off old ties.'

'If that's the only use of it—' began Dick, but the Captain did not stay to listen to him.

Mrs. Lancaster, who had not stopped with her father, had reached the corner just above, where they turned down to their own house, and was looking back for him.

'Good-day to you,' he said, flourishing his stick, and he hurried on after his daughter.

'I don't dislike that old fellow,' said Dick to his aunt. 'He used to be very good to me. What a thorough old salt he is! He must find it hard to understand that he is Mrs. Lancaster's father.'

'He admires her very much, I think,' said Miss Northcote. 'I am glad they are so fond of each other—she and her parents. If she did not take care of them, they would be very lonely.'

'Aunt Kate, that is the first good word I ever heard you say for her.'

'Is it, Dick? Well, I may have reasons for not liking her, but I never said or thought that she was without natural affection.'

'No: that would have been rather too hard on her. She will marry again some day: don't you suppose so?'

'Very likely she may.'

'I still think there are two remarkable things about her,' Dick went on, as they walked up the lane. 'She is so ladylike, considering what her parents are—and she never seems the least ashamed of them.'

'Ladylike; yes,' said Miss Northcote. 'Taking the word with the meaning that your grandmother used to give it. Not a lady, but a fair imitation of one.'

'Well, of course,' said Dick rather impatiently. 'Not an aris-

tocrat, like you. We don't think so much of those things in the colonies.'

'Ah, I forgot that. Who was your friend Mrs. Herbert?'

'Oh, she—an old Norfolk family. No doubt about her. But there's a man on the next station—nobody knows who his wife was, yet we are all very friendly together.'

'And is there no difference between her and Mrs. Herbert?'

'Of course, a thousand differences.'

'And I must venture to think, that, if you were to renew your acquaintance with Mrs. Lancaster now—see much of her, I mean—you would soon find out a thousand differences between her and any lady you know.'

'At any rate she is prettier than most of them.'

'Very pretty indeed; there I quite agree with you. She has that immense advantage. And as you say, she is not ashamed of her parents—which one likes, of course.'

Dick had not much more to say in favour of his old friend: it was indeed a subject on which neither of them could talk very openly, and they were both willing to drop it.

Kate Northcote was vexed with herself, and yet could not help feeling anxious and unhappy. She would have given worlds to turn Dick's thoughts away from this woman, who might have her good points, but was, she felt sure, ambitious, designing, and unscrupulous. What could be more natural than that she should try to renew the old flirtation? And Kate could not feel sure about Dick. As a lad he had been sensitive to any flattery and attention, and she could not think that his character was entirely changed, strengthened as it might

be. In fact, she thought him very much the same; his old acquaintances, his old amusements, all had their charm and interest for him still.

That afternoon, Mrs. Lancaster was sitting alone in the drawing-room at Rose Cottage. The little room was quite in shade, for the sun-blinds were down, and there was an almost overpowering scent of roses. The stillness and sleepiness that belong to some Sunday afternoons were there in full strength.

Flora made no pretence to read, or do anything but doze, as she leaned back in the coolest and shadiest corner. She liked to sit in this room, which was quite of her own creating. To her father and mother it was a sort of china-shop, in which they could never be comfortable, though all the screens and trays and ivory ornaments had been brought home by Captain Cardew in his sea-going days. They were very willing, however, that Flora should be a lady, and have this room to herself; they very much preferred staying in the dark parlour on the other side of the passage, where they sat opposite each other in shabby old leather armchairs, and where Captain Cardew was allowed to smoke. Mrs. Cardew, who was weak, was sometimes torn between her admiration for her daughter and her love for her husband, and would take her work and chat with Flora in the drawing-room. But Flora would presently begin to write a letter, or go off into one of her dreaming fits, and then Mrs. Cardew got fidgety; and then her husband called her, and she jumped up and hurried away quite readily.

The parlour had one decided advantage over the drawing-room: it commanded the garden-gate and

the bit of stony lane beyond it. And that afternoon Mrs. Cardew, who was looking out as usual, was startled by the sudden appearance of a gentleman at the gate. She stared a moment, to be sure that he was coming in, and then hurried out to warn her daughter. It would never do for Flora to be caught in a sound nap, such as the Captain was enjoying at this moment.

But something had already roused Flora, and she was sitting awake with her hands before her, ready to receive any number of visitors.

'Dick Northcote, I suppose,' said she.

'Well, I don't know,' said Mrs. Cardew. 'He has grown a beard, and that does change people so—'

'I told you he had. Where are you going, mother?'

'Why, dear, I'm not fit to be seen. I took off my best cap.'

'Never mind. He won't know anything about that. Stay and see him.'

'But, dear—'

'Yes, you must. You look charming.'

Mrs. Cardew, of course, obeyed, but she had some vanity of her own, and was truly sorry to be caught in her old cap. She had been very pretty once—prettier than Flora, the Captain said—and even now, though she had grown stout, and her fair skin had reddened, no one could deny that she was a good-looking woman. A compliment from Flora always made her happy, and she believed she might be looking worse, but still the cap was a trial.

Dick's entrance and his friendly greeting soon made her forget it. She had always been fond of him, when he was a good-for-nothing boy, and had wondered how his relations could be so cruel as to

send him away from them. Whenever the home atmosphere had been gloomy, Dick had known himself sure of a welcome at Rose Cottage, and of all the petting that Mrs. Cardew could add to her daughter's smiles. In those days the Captain still went to sea, and the women had it all their own way. Dick would have been rather ungrateful, perhaps, if he had forgotten those pleasant stolen hours, when he had never troubled himself to think of Flora's motives, and had really believed, sometimes, that she liked him better than anybody else.

Mrs. Cardew hardly realised that this was the same Dick, this broad-shouldered person who sat and talked to her so agreeably about St. Denys and Morebay, and everybody in them, while Flora looked on, and only put a word in now and then. In old times, when Flora was in the room, her mother had been quite accustomed to being nobody, but Dick seemed to have brought better manners back with him from New Zealand. A harder heart, too, which perhaps was the real explanation.

Mrs. Cardew liked him so much, however, that she ventured on an allusion to those old times. She wondered, now, if Mr. Northcote had forgotten the rose-tree he planted under this window. And she had been thinking to herself how fond he used to be of coconut biscuits: did he like them still? Flora frowned, and Dick laughed, colouring slightly.

'I am afraid that is one of the innocent tastes that disappear as one grows older. I wish I was a schoolboy again, if it was only for the sake of your biscuits. I believe one really loses, in life, more than one gains—don't you think so?' turning suddenly to Flora.

'I'm not sure that I do,' she

said, in a low voice. 'No—one learns to understand things—to value them rightly. I don't know why I should answer your question so seriously, though. You were talking about biscuits.'

'So we were,' said Dick. 'They are not so good as they used to be, Mrs. Cardew, are they?'

Mrs. Cardew's opinion was that you might say that of most things. They got dearer, and worse, and very soon even St. Denys would not be a cheap place to live in.

'If it wasn't for Captain Cardew's being connected with the dockyard, I can't be sure that we should stay here,' said she. 'Only my daughter likes it, and, of course, we consider her.'

'Now, mother, you know it would break your heart to leave it,' said Mrs. Lancaster. 'Dear old St. Denys! There is no place like it, I think.'

'Well, I suppose we shall end our days here,' said Mrs. Cardew. 'I'll go and see if the Captain is awake. The best of us are sleepy on Sunday afternoons, Mr. Northcote.'

'Then of course the Captain is,' said Dick, getting up to open the door. 'Don't disturb him for me.'

'Ah, that was just like your old nonsense,' said Mrs. Cardew, with an affectionate sort of laugh.

Dick shut the door after her, came back to the window, and sat down rather nearer Mrs. Lancaster than before. She looked at him, and smiled. There was always a sort of understanding about Flora, a native genius which told her other people's thoughts. It gave her a curious power of attraction. Dick was not at all in love with her now, and was criticising her all the time; but yet, now and then, an unreasonable feeling came over him of being on the edge of a precipice, and obliged to jump down. It was an absurd feeling;

he was quite aware of it, and supposed it was a relic of his old Flora-worship.

'It was very kind of you to call so soon,' she said, after a moment's pause.

'Not at all,' said Dick; 'I have been wishing to come: but I was obliged to go to Pensand and other places.'

'Pensand!' said Flora, seeming interested. 'Have you seen General Hawke's ward—this pretty Miss Ashley?'

'Yes. We travelled down from town together, as it happened.'

'And is she so pretty?'

Dick hesitated. 'Well—you would not say so—and I don't think I should. She has very fine eyes.'

'They are everything to some people.'

'Did the General tell you about her? He seems very fond of her.'

'Dear me, no! The General—how should he? I never see him.'

'Ah—I didn't know,' said Dick, rather surprised at the sudden sharpness of her manner.

For a minute or two the conversation was checked; then Dick, finding it dull, moved to the window and looked out under the sun-blind into the garden.

'It is a shame to shut out your view,' he said. 'Ah, here is my rose! What glorious flowers! May I have one?'

'This is your size, I think,' said Mrs. Lancaster, cutting off a red bud.

'Thank you; exactly,' said Dick, arranging it in his button-hole.

She looked hard at him for a moment. What a change from ten years ago! Then their eyes met, and she knew that he was thinking of the same thing.

She bent forward to look into the garden, but almost immedi-

ately turned back into the room, and sat down in her old place.

Dick stood leaning against the window, with a slight feeling of discomfort; for a moment the silence was awkward.

'Well, do you find St. Denys bearable, now you are come back to it?' she said, in her usual voice, which was quiet and sweet—for there was nothing strong-minded about Flora.

'Bearable! I think as you do—there is no place like it.'

'Indeed! you are very constant. You don't wish yourself anywhere else?'

'Never. It is home to me.'

'That is odd,' said Flora; 'but I must confess that I have the same feeling; when I was away I was not happy. All the sunshine seemed to have stayed here. What fun we used to have when we were young!'

Dick felt sorry for Lancaster, who had taken his bride away into the north of England. But he was rather glad that those old times were to be turned into a joke. She was right, of course; it was fun, though in boyish days it had seemed to be something much graver. Even now, it seemed a little odd that she should allude to those days with a smile.

'Fun to you, and death to me,' he said solemnly. 'How can you laugh? What a life you used to lead me! I have often wondered since how you could be so cruel.'

'Perhaps we had better not talk about it, as your memory is so good,' said Mrs. Lancaster. 'But I don't think we need owe each other a grudge on the subject.'

'On the contrary—' said Dick. He pulled himself up short, being determined not to say anything foolish. It would not do at all

to get into another scrape with Flora, pretty as she was; he could not inflict the Cardew connection on his aunt, or on himself either, were she ten times prettier. Still, a little gentle flirtation was amusing, and could do no harm; he was quite determined to be drawn no further than he chose to go. So he asked Mrs. Lancaster if she still spent her evenings in the Combe. The question had a strange effect upon her; she changed colour suddenly, gave him an odd quick glance, and looked away, nervously playing with her watch-chain.

'The Combe? O, yes, I go there sometimes. But I don't much care for it. It gets damp in the evening, and as one grows older one thinks about that, Mr. Northcote.'

'Perhaps one does, if one is very wise,' said Dick. He was looking at her in some wonder; her discomposure was so evident, and she did not seem able to recover herself at once.

'I'm sorry you have given it up,' he said, after a pause. 'To me the Combe is one of the charms of St. Denys. And the lane going down to it—I wonder how many people have talked nonsense in that lane.'

'Hundreds, no doubt,' said Flora quietly. But there was still a little disturbance in her manner, a slight coldness towards Dick, which he could not understand.

Their talk flagged. Flora's spirits and smiles had deserted her, and her visitor began to feel that he had better go.

Mrs. Cardew had not reappeared. She and the Captain had probably wit enough to know that they were not wanted.

Dick wished his old friend good-bye, and left her, without

any hint of meeting again ; but his thoughts about her were certainly not quite indifferent. His aunt, though she knew very well where he had been, heard no particulars of the visit.

CHAPTER VII.

RANDAL.

MISS WRENCH was gone, and Mabel was left alone with her guardian. For the first few days she was happy enough rambling about the garden, or finding her own occupations in the house. These were not many, and soon resolved themselves into reading the few novels she could find, strumming her school-pieces, not too correctly, on the old piano, and 'grounding' some wool-work that she had begun in London. In the evening, the General taught her to play cards ; through the day she did not see much of him. He had a small study, away from the other rooms, where he spent most of his time, and where Mabel understood that he did not want her company. He did not take her out in the carriage or in the boat, and he told her rather gravely that she must not go outside the gates without her maid. Mabel did not much like her maid, and under these conditions preferred staying inside the gates. But she liked the General ; his manner to her was perfectly kind, and he and all the servants treated her with much respect and consideration. Mabel was amused sometimes by his little formalities, and the compliments he paid her.

But after the first week Pensand Castle began to seem rather a lonely place. No visitors appeared, except Anthony Strange. He, to be sure, was a host in

himself, and the long pleasant talks with him were something to look forward to. In the second week he was at Pensand three times, and looked rather oddly at Mabel when she told him she had been nowhere, and that she could not help wishing to wander about the country.

That very day, before he saw her, he had been asking the General to bring her to Carweston to see his mother. Her guardian answered that some day he hoped to do so, but that at present the poor child was so shy and nervous, even with himself, that he could not put her through the ordeal of making acquaintance with any more strangers.

'A little later, Anthony, when she really feels herself at home among us,' said General Hawke. 'Your mother will understand, I'm sure.'

'You don't think it is the want of society at all?' hinted Anthony, screwing up his face, as he did when anything displeased him.

'No, no. Trust me, my dear fellow,' said the General.

So Anthony gave it up for the time, and made no mischief between the guardian and his ward when she told him a different story. Mabel had now been at Pensand for a fortnight of glorious summer weather. At last, one afternoon, she was driven in from the garden by a shower. She came in at the window of the large drawing-room, laid down her hat there, and went through to the little room to fetch the book she was reading. The door stood half open ; she pushed it gently, and passed in without any noise. Then she started and stood still.

In a very soft and comfortable armchair opposite, where she had enjoyed many an idle hour's reading, a young man was sitting

with his head thrown back, fast asleep. It was a dark handsome face, pale and colourless, with a long black moustache. His arms were folded loosely, and Mabel noticed his hands: they were small and delicate, with taper fingers like a woman's. Mabel remembered the photograph in the book on the table, and knew him at once. It was Randal Hawke, the General's only son.

The next moment he opened his eyes, stared at her for a moment, then got up and bowed to her.

'Pray forgive me,' he said. 'I did not expect a lady visitor in my den.'

'Is this your den?' said Mabel, making a step backwards.

'Yes. Don't go, please. So my father took the credit of it to himself, did he? No, I couldn't stand the mustiness of the rest of the house, so I tried to civilise this one room. I see I did right, by your coming in so naturally.'

'I had no idea you were here,' said Mabel. 'I only came for a book.'

'Yes. Here you find the books that please you best. We may as well know each other. Let me introduce Randal Hawke to—Miss Ashley.'

Mabel smiled, but rather gravely; she did not quite like or understand his manner. It was as odd an introduction as that to Anthony in the field, but it did not seem likely to be the beginning of a friendship. Randal only looked at her curiously: there was no kindly interest about him. In fact, she did not like him, and was sorry he had come; a strange conclusion for a girl, especially in her circumstances. The handsome son of the house would not have expected to find himself unwelcome.

Mabel took up her book and

retreated into the drawing-room, where Randal followed her immediately.

'Do you know, Miss Ashley, you quite took me by surprise,' he said. 'I heard you were out, and I told them to let me know when you came in, that I might present myself in proper form. I did not mean you to find me snoring in your precincts. My only excuse is, that I was travelling all night.'

'I am very sorry I disturbed you,' said Mabel quietly.

'Not at all. I am delighted. We shall make acquaintance all the sooner.'

Mabel had placed herself in one of the corners of a large old-fashioned sofa. He sat down at the other end, looking at her for a minute in silence. There was plenty to criticise, and not much to admire, in poor Mabel. Perhaps she felt this herself, for there was a bright flush of pain in her cheeks; it had been a trial to limp along the length of the drawing-room, he following her closely. Randal looked, and pulled his moustache, till she lifted up her head and met his eyes, steadily. Then he changed his position, lounged back in the corner, and began to talk.

'How do you like this abode of rats and owls? Has my father done anything to amuse you?'

'I am very happy. General Hawke is most kind. And I think it is a lovely old place,' said Mabel.

'I am sorry to hear all that, for I was going to offer you my sympathy. Seriously, though—you must be awfully dull.'

'Why must I?'

'Doesn't it stand to reason? With nobody to speak to but my father! I don't want to speak ill of him, but he is old, and that means a great deal. Candidly, do you know, I think Colonel Ashley

made a great mistake, when he chose my father to be your guardian. He is old. He doesn't understand that young people want to live and to see life. He saw plenty of it when he was young, but he forgets all that. It was very nice of Colonel Ashley, you know—showed great confidence—but it was a mistake.'

'But I tell you,' said Mabel earnestly, 'I am very happy.'

'You are very good, I think,' said Randal, smiling.

'O, no, I'm not. Did you know papa?'

The General had never mentioned her father's name. Randal, by speaking of him so frankly, scored a point for himself at once. All the depth of Mabel's character, the grief, the objectless love, rose up at that name, and Randal Hawke was surprised, as far as anything could surprise a man of his experience, at the expression of the eyes that gazed at him.

'Some years ago I went to India,' he said, 'and I saw him at Madras. I was only a lad, but old enough to admire him, and to know what a splendid soldier he was. Such a fine-looking fellow too. But I daresay you have a portrait of him.'

'Yes, but— Tell me more about him.'

Randal brushed up his memory very successfully, and told the lonely girl a long history of her father's life at Madras, his friends, and his occupations. Mabel listened intently. At last she said,

'I was to have gone out to him that very year.'

'Ah, you must have been tired of school.'

'I was,' said Mabel, with a long sigh.

'Then I shall take a little credit to myself. I told my father that he had no business to leave you so long at school—that you were

grown up, and it was time that sort of thing should end. Was I right?'

'Yes, indeed. But how did you know? you never saw me.'

'I had thought about you, though. And I understood a good deal better than my father what your feelings were likely to be. I am glad I was right. And I'm glad you like Pensand; but that won't last long. You think so, but you are mistaken. I suppose you like it because it is pretty.'

'Because it is beautiful.'

'When you get to my time of life, you will think nothing so boring as a pretty place. To stand and stare, and hear stupid people going into raptures. There are worse people, though, who take it all in with a rapt artistic gaze, till you expect to see them break out into poetry or painting. The world is a mass of humbug. All the poets and painters ought to be kicked.'

'Why?' said Mabel.

'Because they are all humbugs. They study the temper of the times, read reviews, and then write and paint whatever will make them fashionable and bring them money. I don't think you need look shocked. Everything in the world is carried on in the same way. There is no honour, no true genius. We must do without them.'

'If I believed you, I should be very sorry,' said Mabel.

'Of course you don't believe me, living here in paradise. I spend most of my time in London, unfortunately,' said Randal. 'There every one does what is best for himself.'

'Or worst,' Mabel thought dimly to herself, but she did not feel able to argue with any one so wise.

The rain had cleared away, and

the sun was shining again on the lawn. Then a tall figure crossed over from the shrubberies, and approached the window with long swift steps.

'Hallo! Don Quixote!' said Mr. Hawke. 'He makes himself at home.'

Some further mutterings escaped Mabel's ears.

'Mr. Strange! I am so glad,' she said, getting up and moving forward to meet Anthony.

'How are you to-day?' said Anthony, seizing her hand in both his, and bending down towards her with evident delight. 'I have been looking for you in the garden. Don't you want some roses? Come out and gather them: it is new life after the rain.'

'Sorry to interrupt you—but are you the gardener?' said Randal, raising himself slowly from the sofa.

'Ah—Randal, what are you doing here?' said Mr. Strange, holding out his hand.

'I may put the same question—with a better right, don't you think?' said Randal lazily.

They were an odd contrast. Anthony tall, plain, and awkward, with loose unclerical clothes which might have been made by the little tailor in St. Denys; Randal much shorter, but graceful and well-proportioned, with his handsome clear-cut face, perfect dress, and air of cool self-possession. Anthony looked from him to Mabel, and reddened slightly as he answered, 'Well, you are not wrong there. Your father has given me leave, sir, to walk about Pensand as I please, and to make any number of short cuts. I don't show them to anybody else, except Miss Ashley. Do you disapprove?'

'I do—of the exception, and the whole affair. But it is my father's business, not mine, so pray

walk about the garden as you please. How are you, and how is Mrs. Strange?'

'That is the sort of quarrel I like,' said Anthony to Mabel. 'First knock a man down, and then ask how he feels.—My mother is not very well, thank you, Randal. And the General, how's he? Does he like your coming down to box our ears all round?'

'Can't tell you, for I have not seen him yet. You know more about him than I do.'

'You will find him in very good spirits,' said Anthony quietly; then turning to Mabel, 'Will you come into the garden? Everything is green and fresh, and the birds want to tell you how they are enjoying themselves.'

'No, Miss Ashley, don't go into that damp garden,' said Randal. 'You will catch cold. Stay here and talk to me.'

Mabel glanced from one to the other; they both seemed waiting for her decision, and both looked as grave as if a good deal depended on it. She did not hesitate more than a moment, but took up her hat and stepped out of the window.

'I should like to go into the garden,' she said; at which they both smiled, Anthony brightly, Randal disagreeably.

'Well, you will forgive me for staying behind,' he said. 'You have a good escort: he knows the place better than I do, and I have to speak to my father.'

'I think the General is in his study,' said Mabel.

'Thank you; I shall find him.'

He stood at the window as they walked across the lawn, looking after them with a doubtful unpleasant expression. He heard Mabel laughing, freely and happily, at some remark of Anthony's. He shrugged his shoulders and turned away.

General Hawke was half asleep over a book in the dark little room he called his study. His son's entrance roused him effectually, and he seemed thoroughly glad to see him. But the motive of Randal's visit was a mystery.

'A flying visit, eh? Why don't you stay a week?' said the General. 'What is the use of coming for a day?'

'I may come for a week, or more, by and by,' said Randal. 'But down here you want looking up sometimes, it strikes me. I find that other people take my place.'

'What do you mean?'

'Well, it is not quite nice to see that fellow Strange walking about the place as if it was his own, entertaining our guests—asking me what I'm doing here. If I had not been better-tempered than most people, I should have given him a cross answer.'

'Poor Anthony!' said the General, laughing.

'He is an object of pity, no doubt. But I don't know whether you will feel quite so much compassion for him, when he walks off with Mabel Ashley.'

'Nonsense! He is twice her age, to begin with. And she laughs at him, sees his absurdities keenly enough, I can tell you. Anthony amuses her beyond measure. Nobody but you would think of such a thing.'

'Nobody but me! And why me? Because I have seen enough of the world to know that the people who seem most unlikely are just those who thwart your plans, and thrust themselves into all sorts of inconvenient places. Anthony does not think himself old, I can tell you. He thinks himself a good-looking young fellow, fit to enter the lists with anybody. It was plain enough just now.'

'Is he here now?'

'Of course. I suspect he is here every day. Walks in at the drawing-room window, and asks Miss Ashley to come into the garden. Off she goes, evidently liking his company better than mine.'

'It would never have occurred to me to be jealous of old Anthony,' said the General, with a shade of contempt. 'Now, Dick Northcote—I thought there was some danger there.'

'Not a bit of it. You told me about the journey. Unless Dick is immensely altered, he is not the man to be attracted by that girl.'

'Even if he was, she is prejudiced against him,' said General Hawke. 'I told her the Cardew story and so on. He has only been here once, with Miss Northcote, and then Mabel and he were as cool as possible. It is more likely perhaps that his old love will lay hold of him again. She keeps her looks wonderfully.'

'Do you think so?' said Randal carelessly. He was looking out of the window, and gnawing his moustache. There was a minute of silence.

'By the bye, Randal,' said his father, 'how did her portrait get into such a very conspicuous place in your book? opposite your own. I was surprised to see it there. Mabel was a good deal struck.'

'By the portrait, or its position?'

'The portrait,' said General Hawke, raising his eyes with a shade of wonder.

'Well, it is uncommonly pretty. I bought it at Morebay, and rather liked to look at it, when it was new. I suppose that was why I put it opposite my own. It need not stay there.'

'Well, it does not really signify in the least. Perhaps it would be better not—a person in that posi-

tion, so well known about here. The most innocent things give rise to remark—better avoided. Servants, for instance.'

'The servants are not likely to make remarks on me or my affairs; they know me too well for that,' said Randal, a faint shade of colour deepening his dark skin.

'Well, no, they are not,' assented the General. 'What do you think of Mabel?'

'Very plain. Quite odd-looking.'

'Perhaps so. I should not speak so strongly, however. It is a face that lights up. I have seen her look quite handsome. To me the great drawback is the poor thing's lameness.'

'Very awkward, and she feels it herself.'

'You have not had time yet, I suppose,' said the General, turning round in his chair, and fixing his eyes on his son, 'to decide whether you can carry out that idea. I see no objection—I really like the girl, and I believe her looks improve on acquaintance.'

'There is nothing commonplace about her, at any rate,' said Randal. 'And my mind was made up beforehand. I shall not alter it. Can't afford to have any fancies about the matter. I wish she was fair, and I wish she didn't limp. I wish she was more ornamental, but one can't have everything. I must live, and must keep Pensand, I suppose, if I can.'

'Certainly,' said the General. He sighed, and looked quite haggard with care and anxiety. 'Ashley ought to think it a very good use for his money.'

'He's dead, so it doesn't matter what he thinks,' said Randal.

His father took no notice of this sentiment, but went on after a moment,

'As to the ornamental part of the business, it is only necessary that one should do that. Most people think you good-looking enough, don't they?'

'Yes, I quite agree with them, and I hope Miss Ashley will. Look here, father. You are managing her very well, except that you might be more careful about Strange. Keep on the same tack. Let her see that we are the only friends she has—make her look forward to my coming for amusement. Unless any other nonsense is put into her head, I shall be all right. What a stupid arrangement it is, that one can't have a woman's money without herself into the bargain.'

'My dear fellow, you are rather too strong,' said the General. 'I tell you she is a very nice girl.'

'There are a great many nice girls in the world that one doesn't want to marry. However, if Fate will have it so—' said Randal, who was standing on the hearth-rug, admiring himself in the looking-glass.

'You mean to behave well to her, I hope,' said his father rather sharply.

'Like an angel. I consider that there is nothing so vulgar as to behave ill to your wife.'

CHAPTER VIII.

DICK'S FATE.

FOR a good many days after that Sunday, Dick saw hardly anything of Mrs. Lancaster. Once he stopped and talked to her at the gate, when she was gathering roses. Another day they walked down Fore-street together as far as the post-office, where she posted a very thick letter. Miss Northcote was surprised and thankful that there were no appointments for evening walks,

or boating, or sitting in the Combe, and began to think she had done Mrs. Lancaster injustice; she did not seem inclined to run after Dick at all. The old Captain met him in Morebay one day, and asked him to come in and see them that evening, but fortunately Dick had another engagement. He was everything to his aunt, and she was quite happy. All their old friends in the neighbourhood were anxious to see the returned wanderer. Dick was ready to go everywhere, liked it all the better if his aunt went with him, and delighted the old friends by his good-humour, pleasantness, and intelligence. They found it hard to believe that this was the unsatisfactory lad of ten years ago.

On the day of Randal Hawke's visit to Pensand, it happened that Dick had walked over in the morning to Carweston, and had lunched with Mrs. Strange and Anthony. Then he and Anthony had walked together a good part of the way back, parting at a corner in the road, where Anthony struck off across the fields towards Pensand. Soon afterwards the rain came down sharply, and Dick turned into a cottage by the roadside, where an old woman lived who had been his nurse. Her garden was full of roses. A sweet small-leaved honeysuckle clustered over the green porch, which was partly glazed, and lined with shelves of geraniums; on each side stood tall white lilies in a row.

Mrs. Penny's two little rooms were museums of old oak and old china; her late husband, as she told Dick, had been fond of 'pick-ing up they things.'

'Bless you, he bought 'em all down to Morebay,' said she. 'A lot o' rubbish, Master Dick, but it pleased him, poor man.'

'If you were to sell them to the right people,' said Dick, 'you would find them anything but rubbish. Mrs. Strange would buy them all in a minute.'

'No,' said she, 'I won't sell 'em. It pleased him, poor man. It'd vex him to know as I didn't care about 'em, and he was always a kind soul.'

With these words Mrs. Penny went into a cupboard, from which she presently brought out her best tea-things. Dick found that he was expected to drink tea with her, and took it philosophically, though the rain had cleared off and the sky was blue again. There was something of the schoolboy left in him still; to this and his thorough good-nature Mrs. Penny owed one of the pleasantest hours she had spent for many a year, hearing from Master Dick's own mouth a history of his life in New Zealand, with adventures which made her tremble. But he was none the worse for it all, that was a comfort.

'Well,' said she, as he was going away, 'Mrs. Lancaster told me as you'd grown into ever such a handsome man. She's gone off a good bit, ain't she, Master Dick? What a pretty girl she was, to be sure! I often see her. She walks along this road pretty constant. She likes the view down below there, so she tells me. But I believe she's got a young man somewheres out this way.'

'You shouldn't gossip, nurse,' said Dick. The old woman's words were intensely annoying to him; he hardly knew why, and was angry with himself for being annoyed. 'Mrs. Lancaster would not like it.'

'I saw her talking to somebody, though, one afternoon,' Mrs. Penny persisted. 'It was near a month ago. When they saw me turn the

corner, he walked into one o' them fields, and she come on as if nothing was the matter. I couldn't see him well for the distance, and my sight not being what it was. But he weren't near such a man as you be, Master Dick.'

'All right, nurse. Whoever he might be, it is no business of yours or mine.'

As Dick went off down the road, he was troubled with a feeling that something disagreeable had happened. He tried to reason himself out of it. Flora Lancaster was nothing to him. If she was entangled with somebody else, so much the better, perhaps. Aunt Kate, at least, would be glad.

By the time Dick had walked a quarter of a mile, he had convinced himself that Mrs. Penny's gossip was the best news he could have heard. Still, though he might whistle as he walked, and congratulate himself on the pleasantness of things in general, and the beauty of this view in particular, the fact remained that he was in a very bad temper, angry with himself, angry with Flora, angry with the old woman and her tea, and the nonsense she had poured out after it.

The road grew more beautiful, but he had scarcely eyes to see what lay before him. On the right there were high green banks sprinkled with heather; on the left a low stone wall running along the edge of the road, on which every shade of colour was to be found,—ivy, fern, varied lichens, and in one place a blaze of brilliantly yellow stone-crop. Clouds were passing over the purple distance, but the sun just caught this, and deepened it into a wall of glowing gold. Beyond, the ground went down in long gradual slopes, trending towards the river Mora, which took and polished all the colours of clouds

and hills and trees, lying here outspread like a great mirror, and losing itself further on among the wild high banks that came crowding down to it. Beyond it, distant hills and moors rose up into the sky, fading away into fainter tints of distance, but seeming, in the clearness of that summer evening, to be painted with a fine brush on the background of tender blue. The clouds that shaded the middle distance were passing gradually away, and all the hills were coming out one by one into sunshine. And in the foreground, between that yellow wall and the river, one tall Scotch fir rose from the upper part of the slope, its red trunk and dark solemn foliage standing out deep and vivid against clouds and far-off hills.

Dick stopped at the turn in the road which brought this view before his eyes, but not entirely for the sake of its beauty. In the full sunlight, close to the mass of yellow stonecrop, a woman was standing, looking over the wall. There was something about her familiar to Dick, and as he walked on and drew nearer he saw that his first impression was right: it was Flora Lancaster. She turned round and faced him. Her colour was unusually bright, and her eyes shone as they used to shine when she was a girl; but as Dick came up, he thought there was something odd and nervous in her manner.

'Did you ever see anything more lovely than this view?' she said, turning her face towards it again. 'Those hills, and the shadows on the water. I can't tear myself away.'

'Are you very fond of this road?' said Dick, leaning on the wall, with his elbows planted in the stonecrop. 'It is splendid, certainly, and you made half the view, standing here in the fore-

ground. Do you often walk this way?

'Sometimes—but I don't walk much, you know.'

'You prefer it to the Combe?'

'Yes. One gets more fresh air here,' said Flora, gazing up the road. Dick found her face more interesting than the hills and the Mora. He looked, and wondered what was the meaning of the strange excitement in it. After a minute, she looked at him, saw that he was interested, and smiled rather sadly.

'My ways are a puzzle to you, Mr. Northcote, are they not? You wonder what brings me out for solitary walks. Don't you know the luxury of being alone?'

'I can't say I do,' said Dick. 'I hate nothing so much as being alone.'

'O, I love it. That shows how different your life and mine have been.'

Dick was forgetting his ill temper. It occurred to him that now was the time for finding out whether there was any truth in Mrs. Penny's gossip, and whether Flora was a humbug when she talked about solitary walks. A point-blank question would settle it, he thought.

'I have seen nothing of you this last week,' he said. 'Are you waiting here for anybody, or may I walk back with you?'

She was gazing up the road again, but there was no change in her face as she answered, with a short sigh,

'Who should I be waiting for? O, yes, I shall be very glad of your company.'

For a minute or two more they lingered by the wall. Then she seemed tired of standing there, and they strolled slowly down the road. She was rather silent till they came to a lonely cottage standing under the hill. She

asked Dick to wait for her a moment, while she spoke to the woman there. She was in the cottage two or three minutes; and when she came out, and walked away with Dick, the woman came to the door and looked after them.

'Have you been to Pensand again?' she asked Dick presently.

'No. Well, I never cared much for the General. He always was a martinet with everybody but his son, who would not stand it. I don't think it a pleasant house to go to. I like to be made welcome.'

'Ah, you always did,' said Flora, after a moment's pause. 'How does Miss Ashley get on there, I wonder?'

'Very well, I think. The General seems fond of her. Anthony Strange goes there a great deal, and admires her immensely. You know Anthony?'

'By sight. He is very odd-looking; but I suppose he is good. Admires her! What do you mean by that?'

'O, likes her—thinks her pretty and clever and a nice girl altogether.'

'Nothing more?'

'No. Why, he is old enough to be her father. He will never marry, if you mean that,' said Dick, beginning to laugh. 'The idea is ridiculous. Besides—'

'What?'

'I don't know. Nothing!'

'I believe you are a little bit touched yourself with those splendid eyes!'

'Not in the least. Who said they were splendid? Don't, please. I could not stand that—from *you*!'

'O, nonsense!' said Flora. 'Don't be silly! Well, I do like my friends to marry happily, and to be happy—no matter how.'

'Are you happy yourself?' said Dick; and repented the next moment.

'Don't you think that is rather an odd question?' she said gently.

'Yes. You must forgive me.'

'We really are old friends,' said Mrs. Lancaster; 'and we can't talk like strangers, I see. I must let you say what you like. Yes; I forgive you. I am happy now and then, or think myself so. I try to be happy always; but I suppose no one succeeds in that. After my losses it would be strange if I was.'

There was something in this speech that silenced Dick effectually. After being told that he might say what he liked, it became impossible to say anything. He was very much touched by Flora's soft regretful tone and the confidence she seemed ready to give him, but he suddenly lost the power of expressing himself. She did not carry on the subject, and their talk became stupid and uninteresting to a degree. Dick did not feel inclined to meet the blue eyes that appealed to him so often; even his flirting powers seemed to have entirely deserted him, and he felt as foolish as if he was once more eighteen. But when they had reached St. Denys, and he had wished Mrs. Lancaster good-bye at her gate, he turned back, after going a few steps up the hill, and found himself at the gate again. She was not far off, for she had stopped to gather a spray of jessamine from the garden-wall.

'Flora!' said Dick, half under his breath. She started and looked round.

'Mr. Northcote!' with a slight laugh. 'I did not tell you—'

'Never mind,' said Dick, as she came back to the gate. 'There is something I want to read to you. Will you meet me to-morrow evening in the Combe?'

Flora looked at him with grave surprise, and yet the faint sha-

dow of a smile. She did not answer him instantly.

'What have I said or done, I wonder, to make you ask me that? I don't see how I have deserved it. I should like to know.'

'Is it such a very strange thing to ask an old friend?' said Dick. 'I did not mean to offend you.'

'I am not offended. But you forget that we are both ten years older, and that what was very safe nonsense with a boy of eighteen—though I believe he did mean what he said, and was not simply amusing himself, as—Don't answer me, please. I am sorry to say this, but I think you are forgetting yourself a little.'

'Then I can only beg your pardon, Mrs. Lancaster, most sincerely,' said Dick, colouring crimson.

'No, Dick. I tell you I am not angry. Only don't bother me. Why can't you be natural and friendly, without all this nonsense? Meet you in the Combe, indeed! I am not quite young and foolish enough for that.'

Dick had wisdom enough left to let her laugh it off, and not to say the mad words that were in his mind. It was almost too much to be accused of amusing himself. Any truth that there might have been in the accusation was melting away before Flora's distracting prettiness.

'You don't understand me,' he said; 'but it is because you won't. Perhaps I have made fool enough of myself for one day. So good-bye. Do give me that.'

He held out his hand for the jessamine. She gave it to him at once.

'Has Miss Northcote any in her garden?' she said. 'Shall I get you some more?'

'No, thank you,' said Dick; and this time he fairly did walk away up the hill.

That evening, for the first time, Dick behaved to his aunt with a want of consideration. He scarcely spoke at dinner, and afterwards lounged in the window, staring out with an intensity which made Miss Northcote ask whether he was watching for anything.

'Ah, come here. You have first-rate eyes,' said Dick. 'Do you see those two figures going down into the Combe? Who are they, I wonder!'

'A man and a woman, foolish things,' said Miss Northcote, leaning over his shoulder. 'Impossible to say, from this distance, whether they belong to our acquaintance. Most likely not.'

'It might be Mrs. Lancaster, though.'

'Why, Dick! Poor thing! Who could be with her?'

'I don't know.'

'Then it is scarcely friendly or manly of you to suggest it,' said Miss Northcote. 'Mrs. Lancaster would not be obliged to you.'

Dick made no answer.

'They are sitting on the rocks,' he said presently.

'My dear Dick, I call this morbid curiosity. What are those people to you? Come away from the window and talk to me.'

But Dick lingered there, till the gathering twilight made it impossible to see anything that moved in the depths of the Combe. Then he turned away from the window and came to the table, winking his eyes in the light of his aunt's lamp.

'I'm good for nothing to-night. I have a headache,' he said. 'Sorry to be so useless. I'm going out for a stroll, and shall come in better, perhaps.'

'Don't rout out your friends in the Combe: that would be too hard-hearted,' said Miss Northcote.

'I prefer the roads, at this time of night,' answered Dick.

He left his aunt a little anxious and uneasy: she could not help fancying that there was more in this than he chose her to understand. Perhaps she would have been sorry for Dick, if she had known what a horrible state of mind he was in. There was no peace for him in the golden and purple twilight that brooded over rock and river. He was obliged to confess to himself that he had been mistaken in thinking himself free from Flora's influence: it was stronger than ever. Still reason struggled against it: all the objections rose up constantly, only to be forgotten the next moment in the intense attraction of Flora herself. Everything was made worse by her matter-of-fact way of treating him, the idea that after all she was quite indifferent to him, the still more unbearable idea that she might care for somebody else. Dick did not know where all his good resolutions were gone, his cool judgment of Flora and her belongings. Since he had walked down that road with his head full of her, and had suddenly come upon her, standing there by the wall with such a light in her face, he knew that it was all up with him; cool reasonings had had their day. Though he had not yet reached the point of telling her so—somehow, feverishly anxious as he was, he shrank from that and its consequences—he knew that his fate was in Flora's hands, and that she must do as she pleased with him. He knew he was a fool, and called himself one many times over, but the fact remained the same.

He strolled slowly down the hill, past Captain Cardew's house, which was all silent, on over the railway bridge, and down the shaded lane which led towards the Combe. He met nobody. The distant sounds in the village

and on the river only made the silence up here seem more deep. Now and then the softest little wind stirred in the fir-trees at the corner, and brought faint sweet scents from the hedges and the gardens below. Dick did not go far down the lane. After lingering a few minutes near the head of it, staring into its darker recesses, where low trees stretched their boughs across it, and honeysuckle twined itself from side to side, he turned and walked slowly back. Then he stopped again.

This time it was not all silence. Footsteps were coming up the lane, and with them a low murmur of voices. Then a horror of seeing or being seen by any one he knew came over Dick. He did not wait for these people to come up, but walked away more quickly till he reached the bridge. Here three roads met, one of them the lane where old Fenner lived, and where he had met Flora that first evening. He walked a few steps down this, and then stood still in the shadow of the hedge, with an undefined feeling that those people, whoever they were, would turn up the hill. In another minute they reached the corner, where the wind was moaning a little in the tops of the Scotch firs, and there they also stood still.

Dick saw two dark figures, standing very close together, but so much in the shadow that he could not distinguish them well.

One of them spoke in a whisper, and a man's voice answered, 'No; I must see you home.'

Dick fancied that he knew the voice, but could not tell how, or to whom it belonged, and those two walked on immediately, over the bridge and up the hill. Dick did not feel inclined to follow them, though by doing so he might perhaps have resolved his

doubts. He lingered on the bridge with his cigar for about ten minutes longer, then wondered what he was doing there, and advanced a few paces up the hill in a slow objectless way. He was scarcely off the bridge, however, when he met a man walking rather quickly down towards the station, which lay not much more than a hundred yards below. He too was smoking, carried a stick in his hand, and was in the fullest light of the stars and the summer evening—a young well-dressed man, pale, with a black moustache, and his hat pulled forward over his eyes. They met in the middle of the road, and Dick stared at him so hard as to attract his attention, half stopping and turning round, as if he could not believe his eyes.

'Do you wish to speak to me?' said the other man, staring at Dick in his turn.

'I must be right, I think,' said Dick. 'You are Randal Hawke?'

'You have the advantage of me.'

'Don't you know me? I'm Northcote.'

'What, Dick! How are you? Very glad to see you,' said Randal, quite ready to shake hands. 'Surprised, though, to find you loafing about the lanes at night. I heard you had left all your bad ways behind at the Antipodes.'

'Who told you that?' said Dick.

'Different friends of yours. Did anybody know you when you came home? The climate out there must be favourable. How is Miss Northcote?'

'Very well, thanks.'

'Did you find that you had left all the pretty faces behind in the old country? Well, did Flora forgive you for deserting

her, when you told her that? How do you find her? Still the belle of the West?

'What do you think about it?' said Dick.

'What do you mean?'

'You are as good a judge as I am.'

'You are come back in a very nice frame of mind, Dick. You always were an amiable fellow. Walk down with me to the station; my train will be here directly.'

'Come, as to Mrs. Lancaster,' said Dick; 'you perhaps know as well as I do. I'm not mistaken, am I, in thinking that you walked up this hill with her, ten minutes ago?'

Randal looked at him for a moment curiously. There was an odd tone in Dick's voice. In size and strength he certainly had the advantage.

'Are you mad? or what in the world are you talking about?' said Randal, in his coolest tone. 'Or do you want to quarrel with me?'

'Not at all,' said Dick. 'But I should like that little piece of information.'

'Then you can be easily satisfied. I have been spending a few hours at Pensand, and have just walked down to the train. The old man there don't like sending his horses out at night, and I always was a dutiful son. There! I would not have cleared myself of the frightful charge to everybody, but I can feel for a friend's anxieties.'

'It was not you, then?' said Dick thoughtfully.

'Nor Mrs. Lancaster either, probably. She might be rather angry at the suspicion. More likely to have been a grocer's boy and a milliner's girl. Dick, take my advice, and don't let the green-eyed monster get hold of you. By Jove, I must laugh at you. What could have made you think it was me?'

'I thought it was a voice that I knew.'

'His, or hers?'

'His. But it was not yours, of course. I don't know what can have made me think so. I must have been dreaming.'

'The grocer must be a superior fellow. Really, though, I would stay indoors after dinner, if I was subject to seeing visions. You might get yourself into an awkward scrape.'

The absurdity of the whole thing struck Dick so forcibly, under the new light Randal had thrown upon it, that he burst into a roar of laughter, in which his companion made some show of joining.

'Don't mention it to any one, for Heaven's sake,' said Dick, as soon as he had recovered. 'How could I be such a fool?'

'Fortunately you attacked the right person, or the consequences might have been serious,' said Randal quietly. 'What *she* would have said—but that's enough of it. Let us talk about something else.'

LOVE AND TIME.

(*From the French of Ségur.*)

LONG years ago, Old Time, 'tis said,
While plodding his weary way,
Chanced on a stream which swiftly sped,
And to cross it did vain essay.
'Help!' cried he. 'Consider my years!
Will none of you aid me? Alas,
Good friends, I entreat you with tears,
Hither, and help Old Time to pass!'

None heeded his cry, till wafted where
Some damsels in idleness rove,
On further side. To bring him there,
Speed they a skiff propelled by Love.
Others, more staid, were fain to check,
And warningly chanted this rhyme:
'Ah, many a life has made shipwreck
In seeking thus to pass Old Time!'

Young Love made gaily for the shore
Whereon the old wanderer wept;
Proudly turned to ferry him o'er,
Full strong though the dark current swept.
Plying his oars, the radiant boy
Gaily sang and resang this rhyme:
'See, see, dear girls, behold with joy,
How Young Love carries off Old Time!'

Vain boast! Soon spent, down droops his head
('Twas ever his way, I am told);
Old Time takes up the oars instead:
'Tired so soon, yet erewhile so bold?
Poor child, how feebly formed thou art!
Rest, then, now whilst I sing *my* rhyme—
An old refrain from broken heart—
"Love is carried away by Time."

A silv'ry sound of mirth above
Ripples downward over the tide;
One passing fair, in sylvan grove,
Doth Old Time and Young Love deride.
'Hold!' cried the sage, with voice severe;
'Who laughs thus at Love and my rhyme?'
'True Friendship, who has naught to fear;
I yield not to Love nor to Time!'

FORTUNES MADE IN BUSINESS.

IV.

THE STORY OF ISAAC HOLDEN.

IN the last Paris Exhibition there was, in the French section, one little department devoted exclusively to the display of samples of combed wools. There was much that was calculated to charm the eye in that neatly-arranged collection of delicate fibres, so soft and sleek and clean and lustrous did the fleecy fragments look beneath the shelter of their glass cases. Foremost amongst the *exposants* in this department appeared the names of 'I. Holden & Fils;' and although to the uninitiated there might not seem to be much difference between the quality of the *laines peignées* exhibited by this firm and the quality of the wool shown in some of the contiguous cases, still it was plainly observable that such visitors as had special knowledge of these matters bestowed much attention upon the particular case which had been appropriated to the use of 'I. Holden & Fils;' for it was well known to the manufacturers, merchants, and business men connected with the trade that there was represented in that one case the work of the chief firm of woolcombers now in existence.

To the outside world, untutored in the ways of trade and ignorant of the vastness of its many ramifications, a simple statement of this kind will doubtless mean little; but the addition of a few facts and figures, taken from the industrial annals of England and

France, will serve to convey some idea of the magnitude of the woolcombing trade generally, and of the extent of the operations of Messrs. Isaac Holden & Sons in particular. Messrs. Holden have three separate establishments engaged in woolcombing—one at Bradford, one at Croix, near Roubaix, and one at Rheims. These three concerns cover altogether over twenty-three acres of actual flooring, and give employment to 4000 workpeople. The firm have a total of 500 carding and 370 combing machines working, accomplishing as much labour as it would have taken 25,000 workmen to have got through in the old days prior to the introduction of the woolcombing machine.

This gigantic business has been built up with a rapidity which is almost unparalleled. Three decades have hardly passed since Isaac Holden, the founder of the firm, went out as the pioneer partner of Mr. S. C. Lister (whose connection with woolcombing inventions is so well known and commemorated) to seek a fresh field of operation amongst the manufacturers of France for the machine which was destined to make Mr. Holden a princely fortune. How Mr. Holden came to engage upon this enterprise, and how, from being a collier's lad, he worked his way up to a position of splendid commercial prosperity, and gained a degree of affluence which is great even in these days

for a successful captain of industry, it is the purpose of this sketch to relate.

Isaac Holden was born on the 7th of May 1807, at Hurlet, a small village adjoining Nitshill, between Paisley and Glasgow. His father, who bore the same name, had a few years previously held a small farm at Nenthead, near Alston, in Cumberland, of which place he was a native, and had combined the occupation of farmer with that of lead-miner. About the beginning of the century, however, the lead-mines in which his family had long worked with varying success became exhausted, and, in 1801, the father found it necessary to remove to Glasgow, where he succeeded in obtaining employment in a coal-mine. Isaac Holden senior was a man of considerable strength and energy of character, and was possessed of an intelligence superior to his station. He came of a hardy and enterprising race; for the Holdens of Allandale, Nenthead, and Alston were proud to consider themselves descended from that Halfdane of Denmark who ages ago invaded England, and retained possession for some time of Northumberland, Cumberland, and Durham, ultimately settling down on the confines of the three counties. When the poor lead-miner betook himself to Glasgow, he deemed it prudent to leave his wife and four children behind him at the little farm at Nenthead; but it was not long before he felt sufficiently settled in his new occupation to induce him to have his family with him in Glasgow. His wife belonged to a Scotch family of the name of Forrest, and was a pious, industrious, high-principled woman. They had been married in the Anglican Church at Alston. The parents of this hard-working

respectable couple were amongst the earliest followers of John Wesley, and lived and died stanch members of the Wesleyan Church.

After remaining some time at Glasgow, Isaac Holden the father—who seems to have had the capacity of making headway in whatever employment or project he entered upon—obtained a situation at the Wellington pit, Nitshill, and it was during the time that he held the post of headsman at this pit that his son Isaac was born. Assiduous, earnest, and upright in all the relations of life, the elder Holden sought by every means in his power to promote the material and spiritual welfare of his family, and to extend the cause of education and moral progress amongst the people around him. He established a night-school in the village, and devoted his leisure hours to the teaching of his neighbours' children—a duty which he was proud to put upon himself, and which he generously performed without the slightest remuneration. Thus early was manifested the public spirit and philanthropic zeal which have always characterised the actions of the Holdens, and gained for them so wide a measure of respect. On Sundays, as well as on weekdays, the pit headsman kept steadily to his useful work. There was a good Wesleyan chapel at Paisley, three miles away, and seldom a Sunday came that did not find the elder Isaac Holden and his wife and family walking to Paisley to divine service, the younger Isaac forming one of the party while but a mere child, walking and being carried in the arms of his loving father in turns. In addition to accomplishing this religious pilgrimage of six miles every Sunday, the father conducted a Sunday school which he

had established in the village, at a time when such institutions were few and far between.

In 1812, when Isaac was five years of age, the Holdens removed to a small thatched cottage which had been used as a sort of farmhouse, about a mile from Nitshill, where there was a school which served the double purpose of day and Sabbath school. This school, which was in connection with the Church of Scotland, and in the founding and management whereof the elder Holden had taken a leading part, was the place where young Isaac entered upon his first course of educational training. He went regularly to this school until he had reached his tenth year, when the family found it necessary to remove to Kilbarchan, about nine miles distant, where the father had obtained some fresh employment.

Times were very bad at this period. The country had just emerged from that protracted war which had almost drained it of its resources, and brought commercial enterprise to a point of utter stagnation, and the burden of poverty pressed heavily upon the working classes. Labour was but scantily paid for, and poor families were compelled to put their children to work as soon as their little hands were able to earn any trifling sum towards their support. The elder Holden struggled against this as long as he was able, and even contrived to send his son Isaac to the grammar-school of the town for a few months after their removal to Kilbarchan. The lad, however, saw what was passing around him, and felt that his father could ill afford to keep him at school; so he set himself, young as he was, to find some employment. Hand-weaving was one of the chief industries of the district, and

Isaac engaged himself as 'draw-boy' to two weavers in the neighbourhood, his father only consenting to let him go, however, on condition that his education did not suffer. Isaac continued to work as 'draw-boy' for the next two years, during the whole of which time he went to a night-school, and diligently employed himself in improving his education.

It now became necessary for the family to remove again, the father having obtained a better situation at the village of Johnstone. At Johnstone, Isaac was again sent to a day-school; but the yearning for some active occupation seized him once more, and he went to work in a cotton-mill, where he was engaged from early morning until eight o'clock at night, after which hour he went regularly to the night-school attached to the mill. This state of things did not please his father, whose solicitude concerning his son's educational training was always strong; so he took Isaac away from the factory once more, and sent him to a school where he had the good fortune to become the pupil of Mr. John Fraser, a very able and zealous teacher, the father of the celebrated 'Fraser family' of some thirty years ago, and who is still living and glories in the name of the Old Radical, a cognomen by which he is well known in the west of Scotland. Isaac was at this time about thirteen years of age, and began to approach some of the higher branches of study, Latin being a portion of the curriculum of Mr. Fraser's school. But the desire for work was so strong in the lad's mind that he was not to be kept from it, so he again got a situation in a cotton-mill—this time as a 'piecer'—and attended Mr. Fraser's night-class, and continued the study of

Latin and bookkeeping there for about twelve months.

It is related by certain elderly villagers, who can remember the time when they were the companions of Isaac Holden, that about this period an incident happened which probably had some influence for good on the mind of the lad, although in itself the incident would scarcely be considered as of an improving nature. Isaac was a diligent, patient, and persevering worker, and, as is usually the case, these were precisely the qualities of mind which were most obnoxious to the more noisy and more demonstrative of his companions; and to one lad in particular they were so distasteful that he never ceased to tease and domineer over Isaac, until one day this braggart's conduct grew so outrageous that matters were brought to a climax between the two. The lad referred to was a year or two older than Isaac, and considerably taller; he therefore presumed upon his physical superiority, and on the day in question took off Isaac's cap and threw it down into the mud. To the astonishment of the other boys, Isaac told the lad that if he did not at once fetch the cap and clean it he would punish him. The lad laughed, and said, 'An Englishman cannot fight,' and walked away. The same afternoon, however, Isaac sent a friend to challenge the tyrant to battle, and in the evening, after the factory was closed, they met in a field; and after fighting for more than an hour, Isaac was declared the victor, having punished his opponent to such an extent that he was glad to own that an English boy *could* fight after all, and to apologise for his past conduct towards Isaac.

Encounters of this description

were common enough at that day amongst the working population, whose ideas of sport and recreation were generally on the borderland of brutality. It said much for young Isaac's energy of character, however, that, despite the better influences that were at work within him, he could plunge himself into conflict with, and overcome, a blustering overbearing rival.

Later on, Isaac Holden was again in a position to quit the factory and give himself up wholly to the acquirement of knowledge. He returned to Mr. Fraser's school, and remained there until he was fifteen years of age, when his father removed to Paisley, and Isaac was then apprenticed to an uncle, a shawl-weaver.

As Isaac Holden advanced towards manhood, the example of his parents and the deep sympathy he felt with all moral and intellectual progress, tended to give his mind a decided religious cast, and he became a member of the Methodist Church. For a time it appeared as if his life would become altogether alienated from trade pursuits. Shawl-weaving proved to be too much for his strength, and after struggling with it for about twelve months, he relinquished all further effort in that direction and turned his attention more closely than ever to scholastic studies. He joined the school of Mr. John Kennedy, a very able teacher, a noted mathematician, and lecturer on physics, chemistry, and history to various Paisley and Glasgow institutions. When from sixteen to seventeen years of age Isaac became assistant to Mr. Kennedy, and received private lessons from him in mathematics, physics, Latin, Greek, &c. Mr. Kennedy took a kindly interest in his pupil, and was always ready to help and encourage him to higher efforts.

In 1826 the elder Holden died, and young Isaac found his mother and a younger brother entirely dependent upon him. By this time, however, Isaac was happily in a position to provide for them, his employment under Mr. Kennedy being now sufficiently profitable to admit of his doing so. He remained with Mr. Kennedy until January 1828, and then, when in his twenty-first year, he made his first venture out into the world, and engaged himself as mathematical teacher to the Queen-square Academy, Leeds, the principal of which was Mr. James Sigston. This was then one of the largest and most respectable boarding-schools in the country, and seemed to present a good opening for Mr. Holden. Unfortunately, religious feeling ran high at that time, and young Holden had strong views and opinions on matters theological, and expressed them freely and boldly. Strife and contention ensued, and at the end of the first half year the mathematical tutor deemed it advisable to transfer his services to Lingard's grammar-school at Slaithwaite, near Huddersfield, which he entered as teacher of the English and commercial department. Mr. Butterfield, the head-master, was a man of considerable classical attainments, and under him Mr. Holden enjoyed the advantage of being able still further to prosecute his studies in Latin and Greek. For a time all went smoothly, and then the 'religious difficulty' again presented itself, and Mr. Holden found it better to resign.

Mr. Holden now went further south, and engaged as classical master to the Castle-street Academy at Reading, of which institution Mr. Greathead was the principal. At this establishment Mr. Holden was able to have

wider scope for his talents than he had ever had before, and it was there that he first turned his mind to scientific experiment and invention. He taught Latin and Greek to advanced classes, and had also several French classes. He had acquired French at Paisley, in the first instance, from the Rev. John Hick, a Wesleyan minister from Canada, and, having continued the study of the language, then, as well as subsequently, found it of the greatest use to him. Mr. Holden got on so well at the Castle-street Academy that by the end of the first term he was able to establish a series of lectures on science and history, which he gave on Wednesdays and Saturdays to about a hundred youths, varying in age from twelve to twenty-four years. At Mr. Holden's suggestion the youths subscribed to provide a chemical laboratory, and he gave them a lecture on chemistry, with experiments, once or twice a week.

It was in the course of these chemical experiments that Mr. Holden made a discovery, of which he thought little at the time, but which subsequently proved to be of great value to the world at large. Without any specially directed effort, but by accident, as it were, Mr. Holden, in October 1829, invented that most useful and necessary of domestic articles, the lucifer match. Had Mr. Holden at that early period conceived the idea of devoting himself to invention or business enterprise as a means of existence, he would probably have thought less lightly of this discovery, and would have secured the benefit of it to himself, according to the patent laws; but he contented himself simply with imparting the full knowledge of his invention to his science class, and there, as far as he was concerned, was an end of the

matter. The story of this discovery has been told by Mr. Holden himself in the House of Commons before a Select Committee appointed to inquire into the working of the patent laws. We cannot do better, therefore, than give it in his own words.

'I began as an inventor on a very small scale,' said Mr. Holden, in the course of his evidence. 'For what I know, I was the first inventor of lucifer matches; but it was the result of a happy thought. In the morning I used to get up at four o'clock in order to pursue my studies, and I used at that time the flint and steel, in the use of which I found very great inconvenience. I gave lectures in chemistry at the time at a very large academy. Of course I knew, as other chemists did, the explosive material that was necessary in order to produce instantaneous light; but it was very difficult to obtain a light on wood by that explosive material, and the idea occurred to me to put under the explosive mixture sulphur. I did that, and published it in my next lecture, and showed it. There was a young man in the room whose father was a chemist in London, and he immediately wrote to his father about it, and shortly afterwards lucifer matches were issued to the world. I believe that was the first occasion that we had the present lucifer match, and it was one of those inventions that some people think ought not to be protected by a patent. I think that if all inventions were like that, or if we could distinguish one from the other, the principle might hold good. If all inventions were ascertained and carried out into practice with as much facility as in this case, no one would perhaps think of taking out a patent. I was urged to go

and take out a patent immediately; but I thought it was so small a matter, and it cost me so little labour, that I did not think it proper to go and get a patent, otherwise I have no doubt it would have been very profitable.'

Small as the impression was that was made upon Mr. Holden by this circumstance at the time, there is little doubt it tended to direct his mind towards invention as an ultimate means to the attainment of wealth. Still he was so deeply imbued with religious sentiments and yearnings, that for a long time he seemed to hover between the field of Christian labour and ministration and the field of industrial enterprise. He remained for eighteen months at the Reading academy, which for that period provided him with a happy home and a sphere of useful activity; but, his health failing him, he was compelled to resign his situation and return to his northern home. Further than that, he was forced to relinquish an engagement which he had entered into to go into the Wesleyan ministry.

It was in June 1830 that Mr. Holden went back to Scotland, much to the delight of his mother, over whose welfare he had continued to exercise all possible protection. An early friend of his in Glasgow erected a school for him, and Mr. Holden was soon in the full enjoyment of the privileges of a Scotch dominie, and it appeared as if he had at last found the one particular work which would have to content him for the remainder of his existence. But accident again intervened, and, ere he had been in his new school six months, the whole tenor of his life was changed by a very simple circumstance. Mr. William Townend, a member of the firm of Townend Brothers, of

Cullingworth, near Bingley, in Yorkshire, happened to be in Glasgow in the November of that year, and was looking about for some one whom he might engage as bookkeeper. A local gentleman, who knew Mr. Holden well, recommended the young schoolmaster for the post, and Mr. Townend called on Mr. Holden and offered to engage him. After a day's consideration, and with the consent of the friend who had built the school, Mr. Holden accepted the offer, sold the furniture and good-will of the school to an old pedagogue in the neighbourhood, and in about a week from that time left Scotland for Cullingworth, where he duly arrived at the end of November 1830.

This was the turning-point in Mr. Holden's career. Henceforward he devoted his whole energy and ability to industrial pursuits, and found himself in an atmosphere congenial to his inclinations, where the full force of his intelligence, perseverance, and industry—qualities which constitute the leading elements of what we commonly term genius—could be successfully exerted. Cullingworth was, and still is, a sort of old-world place, beyond the reach of railways, 'smelling of Flora and the country green,' inhabited by a community of rugged, good-hearted Yorkshire dalesmen, and perched high among the same moorland hills upon which Charlotte Brontë used to look out from the lonely Haworth parsonage where she wrote her remarkable books. At first it must have seemed a curious notion to plant a factory out in this remote corner of the world; but the Townends were men of 'grit' and energy, and they succeeded in establishing there an extensive manufacturing concern, and in gathering

round them a prosperous hard-working community.

Coming amongst these people at so favourable a time—himself in the full vigour of youth and hope and high purpose, and the trade with which he was connecting himself in the active process of expansion and development—Mr. Holden soon found that he could give such shape and purpose to his life as had never before appeared possible. In the worsted trade he saw that there was a wide field for the exercise of inventive skill, and for the employment of labour and enterprise; and with a worthy ambition he set himself to work to achieve a position of honour in the industrial world, with which he had now so firmly allied himself. Buffon said that genius was patience; some other celebrated person has said that it is 'the power of making efforts.' If that be so, Isaac Holden must undoubtedly be credited with the possession of genius, for it is in patience and continuance of effort that he has, above all, distinguished himself. For sixteen years—from 1830 to 1846—Mr. Holden devoted himself to the service of Messrs. Townend, and during all those years of study and experience was steadily preparing himself for the particular work which he afterwards adopted as the chief object of his life—machine woolcombing.

At the time when Mr. Holden came to Cullingworth, the woolcombing machine was far from being an accomplished fact. Inventors were at work in England, France, and America trying to solve the problem; but much remained to be done before the labour of the handcomber was to be effectually superseded. It would be impossible within the limits of this paper to trace the history of

the woolcombing machine through its various stages of existence, from the time of the Rev. Dr. Cartwright, the inventor of the powerloom, who so far back as the year 1790 took out a patent for woolcombing, to the present year of grace, when Mr. Holden, after upwards of forty years' experience, has added yet another woolcombing patent to the hundreds that have been taken out before. The wonderful amount of experiment that has been made from time to time in the creation of the woolcombing machine is to some extent indicated by the statements made by Mr. Holden before the Royal Commission. He said he had been told that 'experiments connected with the combing of wool have cost the experimenting inventors the sum of 2,000,000*l.* sterling;' that he himself had spent 50,000*l.* in experiments, and that Mr. Lister had spent a greater sum even than that.

Mr. Holden's first acquaintance with woolcombing was made immediately after his arrival at Cullingworth, when one of the Townends, after showing him round the works, took him to see a handcomber. Mr. Holden inquired if the manual operation he then saw being performed had not been attempted to be done by machine, and he was told that there had been many attempts, but that the fibre was so delicate, and so difficult of treatment by machinery, that every trial had failed. From that time Mr. Holden decided to make it his work to try to overcome the difficulty. He began by making himself acquainted with all that had been previously done in this direction, and then he commenced to experiment on his own account.

For about a year Mr. Holden acted as bookkeeper to Messrs. Townend; but it was soon seen

that the mill was his proper sphere; and from that time it was there that he chiefly employed himself, after a while being made manager, and subsequently partner. Those were days of hard and earnest work. He went to the mill every morning at six o'clock, and seldom left it before ten at night; and only on two or three occasions during fifteen years did he take a week or two's holiday.

In 1832 Mr. Holden married his first wife, Marion, the eldest daughter of Mr. Angus Love of Paisley. This estimable lady, to whom he had been engaged since 1826, proved a valuable helpmeet to the inventor, and by her womanly heart and excellent example won the esteem of all who knew her.

In 1833 Mr. Holden urged Messrs. Townend to try Collier's combing-machines, which had just been patented, and they purchased seven of them. The machines, however, were very imperfect, and brought loss and trouble to Messrs. Townend. For a time Mr. George Townend, the senior partner, looked after the machines; but in 1836 he gave them over to Mr. Holden, and the latter experimented upon them, and applied such improvements as enabled them to be worked to advantage.

As time wore on, Mr. Holden grew more desirous than ever of concentrating his energies upon the combing-machine. Many other successful inventors were already in the field, and important patents for combing-machines had been taken out by Mr. Lister, Mr. Donisthorpe, Mr. Ramsbotham, and others; but Mr. Holden's idea was to imitate as closely as possible the work of the handcomber, and on that basis he has consistently laboured throughout. It is not the time now to say how much this or that inventor has

done towards perfecting the combing-machine; the story is one of such great complexity, and has engaged so many conflicting interests, that it is difficult to remove it into the region of clear and unbiased narrative. Suffice it that the manufacturing world is under great obligation to the noble workers by whose ingenuity and industry the invention has, in its several forms, been wrought out. The names of Collier, Heilmann, Donisthorpe, Lister, Holden, Noble, and Hubner must always stand prominently forth in the history of woolcombing, whenever that history comes to be written. To Mr. Lister, Bradford has already erected a monument, in celebration chiefly of his achievements in regard to the combing-machine. For very many years Mr. Lister occupied himself, and was the means of occupying others, in improving this invention; and when Mr. Holden found that Messrs. Townend were not inclined to risk anything on woolcombing patents, he resolved to leave Cullingworth, and endeavour to effect an alliance of some sort with Mr. Lister.

In 1846, therefore, Mr. Holden removed to Bradford, and took premises there, where he worked out some plans of making Heald and Genappe yarns, and some improvements in carding, and in Collier's combing-machine, which latter were patented in Lister & Holden's joint-patent of 1847. In an interview with Mr. Lister in 1847, and from time to time up to August 1848, Mr. Holden avowed his ability to improve Mr. Lister's machine, so as to make it a most valuable one for merino wools, and advised Mr. Lister to introduce the machine into France, where Mr. Holden thought it would have a better chance than in England. The upshot was that,

after a journey of inspection which Mr. Holden made in September and October 1848, the two agreed to begin combing there in partnership, under the style or firm of 'Lister & Holden.'

The troubled condition of the political horizon, and the intense uneasiness which prevailed in commercial circles during this year of revolution, would have deterred most men from venturing upon an enterprise of such magnitude; but Mr. Holden was far-seeing and sagacious, and had full faith in himself and the future. He had, while over in October, chosen a mill for the commencement of operations, and had left their agent to arrange the lease; but when he went to Paris in January 1849, expecting all to be ready, he found himself harassed by disputes and discussions with the trustees of the property, and at length, owing to a strange and unaccountable circumstance, the negotiations were broken off. Mr. Holden dreamed one night that he had gone to St. Denis to look after a mill, and that he had found one there, having been shown over it by candlelight. Whether this induced him to go to St. Denis the following day, or whether some other matter led him there, we are unable to say; but it is the fact that he went thither, that he found a mill that suited him, that he took it, and that he was shown over it by candlelight.

Both in France and in England the manual labour of the handcomber was now destined to be speedily supplanted by the new machines. Up to that time the handcombers had formed a very important element in the worsted industry. They had been looked upon as inevitable components of an extensive trade, and had been accustomed at septennial periods to hold high festival in honour of

their patron-saint, the martyred Bishop Blaize, who was believed to have invented the art of wool-combing in the reign of Diocletian. The last of these pageants was held in Bradford in 1825, five years before Mr. Holden's introduction to the worsted trade. Many men still living hold that day in remembrance. It is recorded that the town was crowded with sightseers, and that the procession, which was to a considerable extent symbolical, created a great impression. First, there came a herald bearing a flag ; then 'wool-staplers on horseback, caparisoned with a fleece ;' then worsted-spinners and manufacturers on horseback, in white-stuff waistcoats, 'with each a sliver over the shoulder and a white-stuff sash, and the horses' necks covered with nets of thick yarn.' Following these came merchants, 'with coloured sashes ;' then 'apprentices and masters' sons,' wearing 'ornamented caps, scarlet-stuff coats, white-stuff waistcoats, and blue pantaloons.' Persons were also dressed up to represent the King, the Queen, Jason, Medea, and so forth ; the legend of the Golden Fleece being worked in in several ways. The Bishop was also personated ; and the procession wound up with 'combers with wool wigs,' and 'dyers with red cockades, blue aprons, and crossed slivers of red and blue.' It was the custom, too, for some leading personage on these occasions to repeat certain lines of verse which had been composed in honour of Bishop Blaize. The lines are curious, if not very poetic, and opened in this strain :

'Hail to the day whose kind auspicious
rays
Deigned first to smile on famous Bishop
Blaize ;
To the great author of our combing
trade,
His days devoted and due honour paid

To him whose fame through Briton's isle
resounds,
To him whose goodness to the poor
abounds ;
Long shall his name in British annals
shine,
And grateful ages offer at his shrine !
By this our trade are thousands daily
fed
With means by it to earn their daily
bread.'

The poet then plunged into mythological imaginings, and finished with the following hearty couplet :

'For England's commerce and for George's
sway,
Each loyal subject give a loud hurrah,
hurrah !'

But there were no more Bishop Blaize festivals to be held after the combing-machine got fairly into operation. There never was a more sudden and complete transformation effected in any branch of industry than this that was wrought in woolcombing. Thousands of combers were left without employment. Messrs. Townend had themselves kept seven hundred handcombers going at one time.

It was the same in France. When Messrs. Lister & Holden began their works at St. Denis, woolcombing was done chiefly by peasant farmers at their own homes. The work was scattered far and wide over the country, being managed by agents in the various localities, who delivered the raw wool to the combers and collected it when combed, at a certain commission. The combs they used were rude instruments with steel teeth, some eight inches long and an eighth of an inch in diameter, and the work they did was so imperfect that the wool required picking in all the stages of spinning and manufacturing. What a difference there was between those handcombs and the combs now used by Messrs. Holden in their machine! The

latter combs contain teeth finer than the finest sewing-needle, in some instances forty of them being set in a lineal inch in the rows of the combs.

Messrs. Lister & Holden had soon a successful woolcombing business established in France. Mr. Holden felt that he had now a work before him that was worthy of all his powers and energy, and he laboured hard to carry it to its full accomplishment. During the first year in France, what was known as 'the circular comb, with Donisthorpe's felling-heads,' was used; but in 1850 Mr. Holden brought forward his favourite 'square motion' machine—a machine which he claims to have mainly originated, and which, year after year, he has so altered and improved as to make it, in many respects, the best machine in the trade. The superiority of the machine is sufficiently attested by the fact that its owners have been able by its aid to create the most extensive woolcombing business in the world. Mr. Holden's partner was in favour of other machines; but with singular tenacity of purpose Mr. Holden adhered to the 'square motion' principle, and, in spite of much contention and bitterness, eventually succeeded in establishing it.

It may not be amiss in this place to indicate briefly, for the information of the reader unversed in the technicals of woolcombing, what the particular operation is that is performed by the combing-machine. The machine takes the raw wool, combs the fibres dexterously out, places them exactly parallel with each other, separates the long fibres from the short ones, and draws out the former into one united sliver, in which condition it is ready to be submitted to the spinning process.

The slivers thus produced are called 'topa.'

Mr. Holden pursued his one object with undeviating, dogged, and incessant perseverance. For many years he worked almost night and day. The mills ran then, as they run now, through the night, two sets of workpeople being constantly employed. In 1852 they extended the sphere of their operations, and founded a branch concern at Rheims, and another at Croix, near Roubaix. While these three French concerns were in operation, Mr. Holden visited each place frequently, always travelling by evening trains, and keeping up an active supervision over the whole of the establishments. He also was often required to visit England, and, altogether, must have had a heavy responsibility upon his shoulders. At one period he had eight lawsuits proceeding at the same time, in reference to patents, and he made it a rule to prepare the briefs himself, and was always present at the audiences in the tribunals. During this exciting time, when his presence was frequently demanded in England, he was sometimes known to cross the Channel five nights in one week, alternately attending the courts in France, and doing business in England during the days. It is worth while remarking that although Mr. Holden had many lawsuits in France, he never lost but one of them; and that one he persevered in only to obtain the decision of the courts on the point whether a few days' delay in taking a French patent after the registration of the English one vitiated the former; and it was ruled that this was so.

In 1858 Mr. Lister desired to retire from the French concerns, and proposed to sell his share in them to Mr. Holden. An arrange-

ment was come to: Mr. Holden bought Mr. Lister's interest; and in January 1859 the present firm of 'Isaac Holden & Sons' was established, Mr. Holden's two sons, Angus and Edward, being taken in as partners. In addition to this, in 1860 Mr. Holden's nephews, Mr. Jonathan Holden and Mr. Isaac H. Crothers, were appointed managing partners, the one at Rheims and the other at Croix; and from that time forward the career of the firm has been one of uninterrupted prosperity.

The works at St. Denis were relinquished in 1860, the place being too far removed from the special industry with which wool-combing was linked. About this time, too, Mr. Holden thought it necessary to remodel all their machinery for washing, carding, and gills, and to perfect the Nacteur comb, from which he anticipated a new life. To accomplish this he purchased a small mill at Bradford, and adapted it as a mechanics' shop for experiments. Four years of excessive application followed, during which time some 20,000*l.* was spent in experiments. The result fully justified the expenditure.

This productive and laborious workshop at Bradford was closed in 1864, soon after the opening of the Alston Works, their Bradford woolcombing concern. Mr. Thomas Craig, who had served the firm faithfully for many years, and who had greatly assisted Mr. Holden by his practical mechanical skill in maturing inventions, was made managing partner of the Alston Works, and the whole three establishments were continued successfully, and are now in full activity.

Mr. Holden's health broke down under this intense strain, and his doctors insisted on an entire change of occupation and

rest. Fortunately, the business of which he was the head had by this time been so completely and successfully established, that it could well afford to dispense with his personal superintendence.

Mr. Holden, who had always taken a deep interest in political matters, and was a Liberal of the most advanced order, was now urged to adopt a parliamentary career; and in July 1865 he was elected to represent the town of Knaresborough, for which place he continued to sit until November 1868, when he resigned the seat in favour of his son-in-law, Mr. Alfred Illingworth, and, in response to the call of the Liberals of the Eastern Division of the West Riding, contested that division in the Liberal interest with Mr. H. J. Thompson, but was defeated. In 1872 he was prevailed upon to come forward to contest the Northern Division of the Riding against Mr. F. S. Powell, for the seat rendered vacant by the death of Sir Francis Crossley. The contest was an exceedingly close one. The poll was the heaviest that had ever been known. Mr. Holden, however, was unsuccessful; but the fact that he secured in that large constituency only forty-four fewer votes than his opponent was almost as good as a victory. The Liberal party were divided by dissensions at this time, or there is little doubt Mr. Holden would have been returned by a large majority. In 1874 the disunion still existed; but had Mr. Holden been brought out again for the Northern Division he would have been successful. As it was, he was once more solicited to fight the battle of the Liberals of the Eastern Division, and he and Sir John Ramsden made a gallant effort on their behalf; but were defeated. Since then Mr. Holden

has been frequently desired to become a parliamentary candidate, but has preferred to remain in retirement. His generous help, however, has always been accorded to every movement for the advancement of his own political cause, and for the social improvement of the people. Mr. Holden's liberality, indeed, is of the most large-hearted description, and in the furtherance of religious, charitable, and political objects, his gifts have been unstinted. Only a month or two ago Mr. Holden and his son Angus gave 3000*l.* towards the establishment of a technical school at Bradford; and the firm to which they belong, it has been estimated, have, during the last ten years, in Bradford alone, given not less than 20,000*l.* in aid of charitable objects and schemes of social improvement; while in France they have contributed even on a wider and more liberal scale. During the trying period of the Franco-German War Messrs. Holden provided all their hands, at Rheims and Croix, with two meals a day gratuitously.

Mr. Holden lost his first wife shortly after his removal to Bradford in 1847, and in 1850 he married Sarah, the daughter of Mr. John Sugden of Dockroyd, Keighley.

Mr. Holden resides at Oakworth House, near Keighley, and has a country mansion at Wiganthorpe, near York. His eldest son, Angus, is the present Mayor of Bradford.

Thus stands the brief outline of Mr. Isaac Holden's remarkable career. The story would be incomplete, however, were we not to make some further reference to the great industrial concerns which, by his energy and skill, he has founded and successfully established.

At Croix, Messrs. Holden & Co. effected a great change in

the configuration of the landscape when they came to put into operation their gigantic works. They found the place a straggling agricultural hamlet of some 1700 inhabitants, and transformed it into an industrial colony whose population is now about 6000. The works cover several acres of ground, and have very picturesque surroundings. They abut upon the main street of the village, which street is called after the resident partner, and is bordered by rows of tall Lombardy poplars. The Rue Holden-Crothers is an orderly well-kept street, extending the whole length of the village. In the middle distance rise the substantial walls of the combing-sheds, and towering high above them can be seen the tall chimneys connected with the engine-houses. At the extreme end of the street there is a row of pleasant-looking houses, with pretty gardens. This is called the 'English Row,' from the fact that it is mostly occupied by the English portion of the Croix community, who number from 200 to 300 persons. Beyond the 'English Row' stands the very French and very handsome chateau which is the residence of Mr. Isaac H. Crothers, the managing partner. At the other end of the village, where the new colony intermingles with the old, there is a fine English church, built and mainly supported by the firm; and an English Mechanics' Institute and an English school have been built in the same locality. Every provision has been made by Messrs. Holden for promoting the social and moral welfare of their work-people.

A branch line of railway runs direct into the works, putting them into communication with all parts of France; and long lines of trucks, piled up with bales of wool, are daily to be seen waiting

their turn for admission into the combing-precincts. Croix is favourably situated, near to Roubaix and Tourcoing, and not far from the ancient town of Lille.

The works at Rheims are constructed on the same principle as those at Croix. The same expanse of walls enclosing several acres of machinery, and the same tall smoke-emitting chimneys, present themselves; and the same care is taken of the social and spiritual comfort of the workpeople. There is an English colony, an English school, and an English lecture-and-reading-room; and a handsome Wesleyan chapel, erected by the firm, stands close to the works, and forms quite an architectural feature. Mr. Jonathan Holden, the managing partner, lives in a large well-appointed mansion adjoining the works, as is the custom in that part of the country.

It is worth while mentioning that the representatives of the firm at Croix and Rheims—Mr. I. H. Crothers and Mr. Jonathan Holden—have both been created Chevaliers of the Legion of Honour, in recognition of the great services rendered to French industry by the firm of which they are such active members.

There is a great contrast between the working regulations which prevail in France and those which obtain in England. The French concerns of Messrs. Isaac Holden & Sons are kept in active working from six o'clock on the Monday morning to twelve o'clock on the Saturday evening. The engines run twenty-two and a half hours out of the twenty-four every day but Monday, and two relays of workpeople are employed, the day-hands working twelve hours and the night-hands ten hours per day. The latter receive the same amount of wages as the former,

the two hours' shorter time being considered equivalent to higher pay for night-labour. Mr. Holden took over with him to France in 1849 a few young English workmen, and from that time to the present there has always been a certain proportion of his own countrymen employed in the French concerns. The French workpeople, however, are active and industrious, and work contentedly and earnestly, and are easy and agreeable to manage when treated with respect and firmness.

The Alston Works at Bradford are situated in the smoke-hued district of Thornton-road, where the worsted industry may be said to have been cradled. The estate comprises eight acres, the great shed alone, in which the different processes of woolcombing are carried on, containing not less than six acres of flooring. In appearance the Alston Works are solid, substantial, and dignified, being built of stone, and of far higher architectural pretensions than is usually the case in buildings designed merely for industrial purposes. Mr. Craig, the managing partner, has a residence adjoining the works, and this and a suite of commodious offices form the Thornton-road boundary of the concern. It is worthy of notice that, in connection with this establishment, Messrs. Holden, with characteristic persistency of endeavour, have obtained water (of which they use immense quantities in washing their wools) by sinking operations within their own premises. After spending 10,000*l.* in this one direction, and boring to an extraordinary depth, they have succeeded in reaching a never-failing supply of water of the purest quality.

Altogether, Messrs. Holden's woolcombing establishments are

entitled to be considered as amongst the greatest marvels of modern industry, and form a remarkable monument to the business sagacity and indomitable energy of their founder. As an example of what can be accomplished by integrity of character, perseverance, inventive skill, and determined purpose, the career of Mr. Isaac Holden is one that may be studied with advantage. For thirty years, through difficulties

of the most harassing description, in the face of unworthy abuse and painful opposition, Mr. Holden held manfully and fixedly on to his one idea, and the result has been the achievement of a well-earned and honourable success.

'It's dogged that does it,' say the north-country folk, of which we have a conspicuous instance in this wonderful career—step by step from the weaver's 'draw-boy' to the ownership of a princely income.

LOUISE.

Birthday Congratulation.

CONGRATULATIONS in plenty,
Some true, some false, I daresay,
O beautiful sweet-and-twenty,
Will be wafted to you to-day.

Some will be borne in the covers
Of letters with dainty scent ;
And some in the vows of lovers
With stammering blandishment ;

Some from the lips of maiden
Jealous and nice and untrue ;
And some from the lips that are laden
Merely with compliment due.

But of wishes from aged or youthful,
Be they pleasant, or many, or few,
Mine at the least shall be truthful,
O lovable lovely Lou.

And I will not recount the graces
Of tress, or bosom, or arm,
Nor dwell in words on your face's
Lovelight, and wonder, and charm.

So with your well-wishes in plenty
Take mine in poetical feet,
For certain as you are twenty
So certainly you are sweet.

A PARISIAN MARRIAGE.

PART I.

INTRODUCTORY.

FOR some time past it had been constantly rumoured in the fashionable world of Paris, which was at length losing all patience, that a marriage was impending between Monsieur le Comte de Vieux-Castel, who traced his genealogy anterior to the days of St. Louis, and Mademoiselle Clotilde Leblanc, whose *dot* mounted up to a million of francs; and the painful state of suspense in which the female friends of the young lady had so long been kept was only recently put an end to by the issue of the accompanying card of invitation:

‘Monsieur and Madame Leblanc have the honour to inform you of the approaching marriage of Mademoiselle Clotilde Leblanc, their daughter, with Monsieur le Comte Gontran de Vieux-Castel; and beg that you will assist at the nuptial benediction, which will be given them at noon on Thursday the 20th instant in the church of St. Germain l’Auxerrois.’

Before complying, however, with the above polite request to be present at a sacrifice which will be celebrated, we know, with unusual pomp, we propose to introduce the victims to the reader; and this we are fortunately enabled to do through the medium of a letter of the bride’s, written, about a fortnight before her marriage, to an intimate friend and former schoolfellow of hers at the convent of the Sacré Cœur, whom she appears to have intrusted with certain little commissions pertain-

ing to her wedding *trousseau*, as the Leblancs were not residing in Paris at the moment, but at their château in the department of the Orne, in the neighbourhood of the large sugar-factory, which was the principal source of Monsieur Leblanc’s immense wealth. Here is the letter referred to:

‘My little white rat, my little grass lamb, my spotless dove, you will not say I do not love you. Do you wish for more, my little roast chicken, my little mystical lizard—no, no; erase mystical lizard, there may be some impiety in it. The expression comes to me from my brother, and you know he is impiety itself, which is, as mamma says, “a cause of incessant and mortal despair to her;” and, for my own part, I am decidedly of mamma’s opinion; but what can one do? He is of age, and besides, he has only that one vice; for he neither smokes nor drinks absinthe, and I will therefore pray for him. There are family burdens which have to be borne, are there not? Now give me your left cheek that I may kiss it, and your right that I may smack it.

‘For after distinctly telling you a rich and light *peurl* separating the scollop from the embroidery, you let the embroidery be put next the scollop, and the *peurl* behind; so that, *ma belle mignonne*, they are lost garments. One dare not look at them; I almost cried. Happily the two other cambric chemises—chemises of ceremony—are great successes. A little

open, perhaps, the lace in front? What do you think? Still it has style, and one does not marry every day. You will remember the bonnet, will you not, *mignonne*? An aerial nothing—that is understood. Gontran—I call him by his Christian name, you see—has sent us the *cachemires* to choose from; the long one gave no trouble, but for the square one we had to have recourse to votes. Fortunately Monsieur le Curé was breakfasting with us that morning. He was heroic, and I could have kissed him.

“But, Monsieur le Curé,” I said to him, “since I tell you that palms are no longer worn—”

“Really, mademoiselle, I was quite ignorant that the palms were *passées*; in that case I incline to the opinion of Monsieur Leblanc, and should fall back upon the black with gold embroidery.”

“You would fall back upon it? That would be fine! Why, the black has not an atom of style,” observed mamma. “He is, indeed, astonishing, is Monsieur le Curé: he imagines he has only to turn to—”

“Pardon, madame; I was perfectly ignorant that style was lacking in that particular shawl. In this case it seems to me that I should scarcely hesitate about returning to the palms, unless—”

“But no, no. Again, the palms have been finally dismissed.”

“Then, ladies, I decline voting.”

“Ah, what a funny scene, my dear, was this choice of the *cachemires*! After all, it was of no great consequence which one I selected; for, although these shawls are *de rigueur* in one’s *trousseau*, you know that they are never worn. Eventually I chose the one with the crimson ground. By the way, tell the laundress to hurry herself. I hear

everything is going on well at the dressmaker’s. My aunt yesterday sent me my *livre de messe*, in advance, as you see; it is a jewel of a book, with a ravishing binding, all mother-of-pearl and silver, and in the middle my arms—a coronet with the martlet and the little machine beneath. I have not yet dared to ask Gontran what that represents. Yes, I am indeed happy, *ma bonne chérie*. Still you can understand that amidst all these preparations I sometimes lose my head, and that if I had not mamma to help me a little I should go crazy. A temporary ballroom is to be built in the park for the day of the contract, when papa presents mamma with a pair of magnificent horses. Chevet of the Palais Royal is to supply the breakfast; it is simpler, you understand, as these people are accustomed to this sort of thing.

“But you will say, “And the hero of the affair, Prince Charming—what about him?”

“Well, he is, as I have more than once told you, a very gallant man, with a fine name, as you know: with respect to which do not omit to remind those stuck-up young ladies of the coronet over the cipher, or rather the interlacing ciphers, somewhat old-fashioned in shape, for they were my choice. Gontran has, moreover, religion and a lofty bearing; you scent the marquis in him a mile off, although he is at present only a count. Let me kiss you *en passant*. He has refused in advance all the offers which the Government will not fail to make him; he assured Monsieur le Curé of this yesterday. This manly conduct on his part not a little contributed to win my father and myself as well. It is courageous, you know, my dear, to confront the storm, and to say to one’s entire

country, "No; I refuse to advance." He thinks it would be opportune to send word of our marriage to his Holiness; and, indeed, as Gontran was once a colonel in his Holiness's Zouaves—he fought at Patay, you know—we could scarcely do otherwise. But what is incontestably aristocratic about him is his foot, which is a woman's and a man's foot at the same time, with a tall and slender instep, and perched high upon the patent-leather heel. The creak of his boot, in fact, resembles the creak of no other; one divines from it that his is the foot of a man who might have buckled on the golden spur and gone to the Crusades, like his ancestors of old. This beauty of foot is the appanage of the younger branch of the family of my future husband. The elder branch are distinguished by their exquisitely-shaped nose, like the Bourbons.

'As to the servants and stables at Gontran's château, all that has been much neglected for some time past. You know that his fortune was somewhat impaired; and he himself acknowledged to us yesterday evening, with charming simplicity—in which, however, one divined the true pride of race—that his château of Fort Vieux, which is a historical monument of Sologne, as Monsieur le Curé has told me, has only the four walls standing. "But," added he, "on the face of the stone which crowns the ruins of the entrance-gate is carved the scutcheon of my family, and that stone, I am proud to say, is intact."

'He said this with such ease, tapping his boot with his cane as he spoke. Papa was as red as if he had just risen from the dinner-table, and I shared his emotion. Can you imagine this manor in ruins, these tall shattered towers,

this massive drawbridge, these immense moats; and their representative, the master of all these poetical things, caressing his boot only two paces away from you?

"Monsieur le Comte," said my father, rising, "the stone of which you speak is alone worth five hundred thousand francs—for me, at least. I beg you to believe it. I—"

'It was embarrassing for papa, you understand.

"It is worth more to me, Monsieur Leblanc," replied Gontran, smiling, with his grand air.

'And he did well to answer thus; in his place I should have done the same, though that has nothing to do with it. It was noble, was it not?

"We will build up the towers of Fort Vieux again," said papa, as he kissed me that evening.

'He is good, poor papa, and mamma as well; but, as Gontran says sometimes, with the air of not wishing to touch upon it, there is in our park a slight smell of coal-smoke, which is no doubt perfectly true, as the factory is only just outside. I was, however, accustomed to this smell, and no longer noticed it. Now I should prefer receiving a slap to hearing that coal-smoke spoken of. Whenever Monsieur le Curé breakfasts here with Gontran, he puts on new bands, and says grace out loud; which so surprised Pierre the first time he heard him that he let fall the plate he held in his hand. Mamma was in such a rage, she was ready to have discharged him on the spot. This is what comes of turning workmen into footmen.

'But I must conclude, *ma belle mignonne*. Hurry every one. Call at Erard's about the grand piano; and, above all, see that they put the little coronet over the cipher. With regard to the liveries, we

shall resume those of the family ; but I have an idea that one could rejuvenate these a little whilst still respecting ancient traditions. For instance, I should preserve the orange breeches and waistcoat, and transform the rusty brown coat, which, I must confess, does not particularly please me.

‘Do not call me “my dear Comtesse” any more in your letters. What a great child you are ! Your watch is a fortnight too fast, *ma belle chérie*.

‘Adieu ; a thousand kisses.—
Your CLOTILDE.

‘P.S. I think he loves me a great deal.’

Everything being satisfactorily arranged, from the ‘*peur*’ separating the scallop from the embroidery’ to the ‘coronet over the interlacing cipher,’ the marriage contract is duly signed, and the *repas du contrat* partaken of. The victims are now ready to undergo the ordeal of the civil marriage at the *mairie* of one of the principal *arrondissements* of Paris.

AT THE MAIRIE.

IN France what is called the civil marriage is looked upon by most young ladies as an extremely disagreeable formality, which might very well be dispensed with in their particular cases. They conceive that persons moving in good society, who can afford the expense of vocal music at their weddings and the laying down of crimson drugget on the church-steps, might surely be excused dancing attendance the day before at the anything but clean and stifling *mairies*. Even if the civil marriage is at all necessary, which they by no means admit, they consider the mayor might attend by appointment at the

parties’ own residences, exacting if necessary a fee for so doing, instead of requiring them to appear before him simply to sign their names in a book, and listen while he rattles through certain extracts from the Code, which are a positive insult to their sex, concluding by boring them with a string of moral truisms respecting the duties of husband and wife to each other, which, if unobjectionable and even proper in the case of common people, are utterly wasted upon persons of position. Mademoiselle Clotilde Leblanc’s account of what transpired in her own case shows how trying all this must be to persons of the least refinement ; and English girls have reason to be grateful to the constitution under which they live that they have not to undergo similar humiliation to that which their French sisters, without exception, are obliged to submit. This young lady remarks :

‘It is no doubt undeniable that the marriage at the *mairie* has a certain importance ; still it is absolutely impossible for a delicate-minded person to regard it at all seriously. I have myself passed through it,’ she observes ; ‘I have undergone, like others of my sex, this painful formality, and cannot revert to it without a feeling of humiliation. Scarcely descended from the carriage, I perceived to the right a muddy staircase, the walls at the foot of which were covered with placards of all sizes. My first thought was that I had done well in not putting on the *robe froncée à la vierge* which Pingat had sent home that very morning. We mounted the staircase, and entered a long, dirty, badly-lighted corridor with a number of glass doors, on which I read “Pompes funèbres, Tournez le bouton,” “Expropriations,” “Décès, Frappez fort,” “Réclamations,”

"Naissances," "Salubrité," &c. ; and at length, "Mariages, Tournez s'il vous plaît." It was there that we entered in company with a child carrying a bottle of ink. The atmosphere was hot and stifling, and almost turned me sick ; but happily a servant in a blue livery came to excuse himself for not having shown us at once into the *salon* of M. le Maire, which it appears serves as a first-class waiting-room on these occasions. I precipitated myself into it, as one precipitates oneself into a carriage when caught in a shower of rain. This *salon* of M. le Maire had a middle-class official air about it that greatly amused me. The timepiece was one of those which one gains at the lotteries of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. I noticed also a barometer and a bookcase, which seemed to have been placed where it was to hide a door ; and above the bookcase a bust of the Republic in plaster. In the centre of the apartment was a long table covered with a green cloth spotted with ink in several places. Imagine the *salon* of a dentist who has been a notary, and you will have an idea of what the room was like. Almost immediately after we entered, two individuals, looking as like a pair of cashiers at a *Magasin de Nouveautés* as it was possible for them to do, brought in a couple of registers, which they opened and commenced writing in. Every now and then they kept leaving off to ask our names, ages, Christian names, &c., and then continued writing, saying in a low tone to one another, "Semicolon between the *conjointes* ;" "fresh line for *parents* ;" "capital letter for *occupation* ;" "day of the month in words." When they had finished, one read what he had been writing out aloud through his nose. I understood absolutely nothing of it except that my name

and that of my *conjoint* were constantly mentioned. A pen was now presented to us, and we signed our names. At this moment two o'clock struck by the timepiece of Monsieur le Maire, and I had an appointment with my dressmaker to alter my corsage, which I was anxious above all things to keep.

"Is it finished?" asked I of Gontran, who, to my great astonishment, looked very pale.

"Not yet," replied he ; "we have now to go into the *Salle des Mariages*."

'We entered a large empty room with great bare walls, having another plaster bust of the Republic above an oak stage, some long forms, and an armchair or two behind them. Everything was covered with dust. I thought we were in a third-class waiting-room, and I could not help glancing inquiringly at mamma and my aunts, who were full of gaiety on seeing these bare benches. The gentlemen, on the contrary, all looked grave, and Gontran, I thought, seemed slightly nervous. That corsage of mine, which it was impossible I could wear until it was altered, haunted me, and I felt considerably relieved when I saw the Maire make his appearance through a little door. He looked both insignificant and awkward in his black coat, which was much too large for him, and which his scarf caused to puff out, as it were. He was nevertheless a very respectable man, who had amassed an honourable fortune by the sale of spring mattresses and iron bedsteads ; still it is difficult to realise the idea of this little, embarrassed, badly-dressed, timid man, with a word pronounced hesitatingly, uniting myself and Gontran in eternal bonds. What made the matter more ridiculous was that at this precise moment I recognised the Maire was the

very image of my pianoforte-tuner. These sort of things are constantly happening to me, and I bit my lip till the blood came in order not to burst out laughing. Monsieur le Maire, after having bowed to us as a man in a white cravat and without his hat ordinarily bows, that is to say sillily, blew his nose, evidently to the satisfaction of his two arms, which up to this moment he had not known what to do with, and then went quickly through the little ceremony. First of all he recited precipitately several passages from the Code, indicating as he went on the numbers of the particular paragraphs, from which I vaguely understood that I was threatened with the gendarmes if I did not blindly submit to the orders, fancies, whims, and caprices of my husband, and if I did not follow him everywhere he chose to take me, even if it were up a sixth story in the Rue Mouffetard. Twenty times I was on the point of interrupting, and saying, "But permit me, Monsieur le Maire, to observe that those words are scarcely polite towards me; besides which, you must yourself know there isn't common sense in them." But I restrained myself, feeling that it would be an improper proceeding on my part to intimidate a magistrate in the performance of what was only his duty, and who seemed, moreover, in a hurry to conclude. Besides, I thought of my appointment, and the misfitting corsage of my wedding-dress. The Maire considered it necessary to add some observations on the duties of husband and wife, society, love of offspring, and similar topics; but all these fine things, which would have made me cry under other circumstances, seemed grotesque to listen to from the lips of a little retired dealer in patent spring

mattresses, uttered too in a kind of third-class waiting-room, with all the various inscriptions on the doors of the adjoining apartments present to my mind, and I had the greatest difficulty in restraining myself from laughing out loud.

'At last the Maire lent forward, and said,

"M. le Comte Gontran de Vieux-Castel, you swear to take for wife Mademoiselle Clotilde Leblanc?"

'Gontran bowed, and answered "yes" with perfect nonchalance; and yet he has since admitted to me that he never experienced more lively emotion than he did when pronouncing that little word.

"Mademoiselle Clotilde Leblanc," added the magistrate, turning towards me, "you swear to take for husband M. le Comte Gontran de Vieux-Castel?"

'I smiled and bowed, saying to myself, "Certainly I do, for it is for that express purpose that I came here."

'This was all. I was now married, it appears. Papa and mamma clasped each other's hands like people who had not seen one another for twenty years, and could hardly refrain from crying. I don't know how it was I did not share their emotion; but it may have been because I was so hungry that I was obliged to stop the carriage at the pastry-cook's before going to the dressmaker's. It was my last girl's tart.'

THE MORNING OF THE SACRIFICE.

CLOTILDE's narrative thus proceeds:

'The next day was the great day, and when I woke it was hardly light. I opened the door leading into the *salon*, and found my

wedding-dress spread out on the sofa, with the folded veil beside it, and my headdress in a white box. Nothing was wanting. I was feverish, excited, uneasy, happy, trembling, like a soldier must feel on the morning of a battle, when he is almost certain of being decorated. I thought neither of my past nor of my future, but was entirely absorbed by the idea of the approaching ceremony; of this sacrament, the most solemn of all in our Church; of the sacred oath which I was about to take; and also by the thought of the crowd of people who would come dressed out to the church in order to catch a sight of me in passing.

‘We breakfasted very early. My father had on his boots, his dress trousers, white cravat, and dressing-gown. My mother was also half dressed. It seemed to me that the servants served me with more than their habitual attention, and treated me with much greater respect. I even recollect that Marie said to me, “Madame remembers the hairdresser is waiting?” “Madame!” Excellent girl; I have not forgotten it.

‘I found it impossible to eat anything; my throat was parched, and I felt shudders of impatience all over me—something like the sensation one experiences when one is very thirsty, and is waiting for the sugar in the *eau sucré* to melt. The marriage of Clementine flitted through my mind; the sound of the organ pealed on my ears all the time I was being dressed. The hairdresser, who also called me “Madame,” executed a coiffure so happily that I remember saying to myself, “This augurs well; this coiffure is a good omen.” I checked Marie, who wanted to lace my stays tighter than usual. I was aware that white makes one look stouter, and that Marie was

not wrong; still I was afraid of its driving the blood to the head, and I have always had a horror of brides looking as if they had just risen from table. Religious emotions should be too profound to betray themselves otherwise than by pallor. It is stupid to blush under particular circumstances.

‘When I was dressed I passed into the *salon*, so as to have more room to walk my skirt about a little. Papa and Gontran were already there, conversing respecting the correct attire for a marriage ceremony, and Gontran frankly declared he preferred the English frock-coat to our evening-dress, though he dared not be the first to inaugurate such a revolution in fashion. It would appear that the newspapers had quite a long controversy on the subject a short time back. As I entered, papa remarked that he hoped the carriages would soon arrive.

“O, they will be here very shortly,” replied Gontran; “I drove round in my brougham.”

“What about the ‘Salutaris’?—you charge yourself with everything—and the *pièce de mariage*?”

“I have the ring all right; but, good gracious, whatever have I done with my *billet de confession*? O, I recollect; I put it away in my cigar-case,” &c.

‘They both spoke very fast, gesticulating like people who are up to their eyes in business. Gontran on perceiving me advanced and kissed my hand; and whilst the *femmes de chambre*, squatted on the ground around me, were smoothing my skirt, and the hairdresser was shortening the *tulle* of my veil, he said to me in a hoarse voice,

“You look charming, *chère amie*.”

‘He did not at all think of what he was saying, and I answered, equally mechanically,

"Do you think so? Don't make the veil too short, Monsieur Sylvain; and, Marie, do not forget the bow of the corsage."

"When one has to see to everything on an occasion like this, one needs more than all one's usual presence of mind."

"I remembered Gontran's hoarseness, and said to myself,

"Surely he must have a cold; it is evident he has had his hair cut too short."

"At this moment papa spoke to him on the subject, and he admitted everything, and with a slightly embarrassed smile asked

papa to lend him an extra pocket-handkerchief.

"It was very silly of me, but I felt vexed; and I remember on descending the staircase, with the skirt of my dress held up behind me, saying to myself,

"I hope to goodness Gontran will never have the indiscretion to sneeze under the canopy."

"We entered the carriage. I felt that every one was looking at me, as I saw in the street beyond the *porte cochère* quite a crowd of people. What I felt is impossible to describe, but it was something delicious."

CLUB CAMEOS.

Patriotism.

WE are told that imitation is the sincerest flattery, and if this be the case, the Frenchman ought by no means to feel his self-love wounded at the homage his country nowadays meets with at our hands. It was once the distinctive characteristic of England that she was not like other continental nations. Her manners, her tastes, her architecture, the habits of her men, the dresses of her women, were all very different from the customs that reigned abroad. It might be difficult at first sight to distinguish between a Frenchman and an Italian, a Spaniard and a Portuguese, a Russian and a German; but an Englishman carried unmistakably his nationality in his face, his walk, and the manner in which he took off his hat. As we were cut off from other countries by our insulated position, so were our inhabitants cut off from other people by their insulated tastes and characteristics. We piqued ourselves upon being cleaner in our habits, more refined in our sanitary arrangements, manlier in our tastes and sports, and at heart more moral and religious in our approval and condemnation of things. We thought that in the 'foreigner' there was little calculated to excite our envy or admiration, and by the word 'foreigner' we generally signified the Frenchman. France was our hereditary foe; she was always threatening our shores; she was the disturber of the peace of Europe; her wit had severely satirised the institutions of our

country, and between the two nations little love was lost. To the Frenchman we were *la perfide Albion*, a nation of shopkeepers, a people with no taste for the fine arts, puritanical in our creed, and good only to breed horses and brew beer. To the 'honest John Bull type' of Englishman the son of Gaul had the manners of a dancing-master, the morals of a courtesan, the dress and appearance of a billiard-marker—a man filthy in his personal habits, effeminate in his tastes, and one whose favourite food was frogs and whose favourite drink was sugar-and-water.

However, thanks to steam and electricity, our prejudices have undergone considerable modification, and, instead of despising the Frenchman, we now run to the other extreme, and import many of his customs with most of his wines to our shores. Slowly but surely our English institutions are becoming Frenchified. Our fashions are copied from those in Paris; our cooks serve up French dishes; the most modest restaurant thinks it incumbent upon itself to translate its thoroughly English bill of fare into the language of France; every hotel that comes into existence offers us that most dull and dreary of all festivities, an English *table d'hôte*; thin sour wines, maliciously labelled clarets and burgundies, have ousted old October ale and old dry port from the cellar; the startling views of domesticity so dear to the French novelist and playwright have been

introduced into our fiction and upon our stage. In spite of the treacheries of our climate, the familiar *café* of the boulevards has been transported into certain of our streets; the games at cards that are now most popular with our youth are those that are freely played in the *cercles* of Paris; whilst the one great stronghold of the country, the English Sunday, is gradually being transformed by the social hospitalities of the fashionable and the efforts of the philanthropist into that of the continent.

I am not for a moment saying that these changes are an improvement or the reverse. I simply state a fact patent to all—that our institutions are becoming Frenchified. And *la belle France* has paid us a similar compliment. As we have adopted, or flatter ourselves that we have adopted, her toilettes, her vintages, her cookery, her gaiety, her morality, her games of chance, so she has introduced our Turf nomenclature into her language, our stallions into her stud, our jockeys into her stable, the strain of our hounds into her packs, pale ale into her liquors, the wares of Savile-row into her sartorial establishments, and built her carriages upon English lines. The result of this reciprocity has been to create in both nations a class of men which, whilst maligning the habits and institutions of its own country, blindly worships all that belongs to its neighbour. We have at Paris the Frenchman who so warmly admires our club-life in Pall Mall, the beauty of our women, the breed of our horses, the freedom of our government, the manliness of our field sports, the cleanliness of our tastes, that, surveying his own fair land from Picardy to Gascony, and from Brittany to Franche Comté, he finds it stale,

flat, and unprofitable, and that out of England there is nothing worthy of envy or acceptance. At London we have the man who is always instituting comparisons between our capital and Paris, very much to the disadvantage of the former, who curses our climate, our architecture, our ill-dressed women, our ill-dressed dishes, our servility to the powers that be, our vulgarity, our mock-modesty, our puritanical habits, our inappreciation of all true art; our love of beer, which makes us gross; our love of field sports, which makes us brutal—in short, everything that belongs to us and our country.

Prominent among this band of Anglophobists is Luttrell Chichester, who, on the very few occasions that he visits 'that damned city of yours,' as he is pleased to call the London of his fathers, makes his home at the Caravan-serai. A younger son, he was passing his time as one of the second secretaries of her Majesty's Embassy at Vienna, copying despatches, and making a *précis* of reports touching the growth and development of Austrian commerce, when, by the whim of a cousin, he became the heir to a fair property situated in the not very beautiful district of East Lincolnshire. To quit diplomacy, to let his newly acquired estate, and to settle in Paris were, as the novelists say, the work of a moment. To be in Paris, and of Paris, had always been the ambition of Chichester. When in the diplomatic service he had exerted all his interest to be attached to our embassy at that gay capital; but the Fates and the Foreign Office had declined to listen to his wishes. He had been sent to Stuttgart, then to Dresden, then—this exchange was delightful—to Ispahan, and then to Vienna; but never once had he had occa-

sion to don his diplomatic uniform at a ball or *levée* at the Tuileries. Thus as soon as he was a free man, and his bankers' book permitted him to enjoy to the full all the fascinations of life, he made Paris his home.

He was precisely the man to enjoy the pursuits and pleasures of this the gayest of cities—the gayest because it is not only the capital of France, but the capital of Europe. He was a Catholic, but his religion sat lightly upon him, never pricking his conscience or interfering with his amusements, yet always ready to soothe him when bilious or disappointed; it was not a curb or a fetter, but an anodyne. He was well-read in the sense that a Frenchman is well-read; he was familiar with the light literature of most countries; he knew most of the great tragedies and comedies that had been written; he was well up in modern history; he had a good practical acquaintance with geography and political economy; he had a keen appreciation of wit and humour; and he knew enough Latin to read the Odes of Horace. He was an epicure; he was fond of amusement; he was addicted very far from wisely to the society of the fair sex; and he could give and swallow any amount of flattery. Between him and the typical Englishman there was little in common. There was a touch of effeminacy in the tastes and habits of Luttrell Chichester. He was fond of ostentation, and was perfectly free from our national *mauvaise honte*. He cared far more to flirt in a boudoir than to ride across country. Spending a great deal of time over his personal appearance, and setting up for a lady-killer of the most seductive description, he was never so happy as when surrounded by women,

complimenting them, escorting them, and carrying out their behests. To such a man—whose fortune permitted him to gamble at his *cercle*, whose birth and religion did not exclude him from the well-winnowed assemblies of the Faubourg St. Germain, who was well introduced into the amusing and cosmopolitan society of the capital—Paris possessed attractions such as no other city could offer. After a couple of winters, Chichester resolved to look upon France as his home, and to substitute Paris for London.

For all practical purposes, he is now as complete a Frenchman as if he had never been born this side of the Channel. He rents a flat near the Champs Elysées, and a small château near Fontainebleau. He is a member of the Bébé Club. He swears fealty to the white flag, and is the most loyal of those who regard Henri Cinq as their king. In his dress, and in the appointments of his chambers and of his country seat, he slavishly imitates the fashions of the land of his adoption. He eschews the society of the English at Paris. He trims his hair, shaves his cheeks, and curls his moustache like a Frenchman. He takes his two meals a day like a Frenchman. He interests himself alone in French politics, and works himself into a passion when the German victories, the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine, and the movements of M. Gambetta are mentioned. When he has occasion to speak English, he shrugs his shoulders and gesticulates like the true Gaul; and when he talks to an Englishman of England, he alludes to her as 'your country.' He has obtained a title from the Pope, and has blossomed forth into the Chevalier Chichestère. Ashamed of our island and avoiding her people, he has so identified himself

with French interests and French manners, that when he is called *un Anglais* he feels himself insulted. It must be admitted, however, that his impersonation of the Frenchman is a great histrionic success ; he both speaks the language and looks the character to perfection.

When Chichester enters the

Caravanserai during one of his short visits to London, the waiters always look upon him as one of our distinguished foreign members, and treat him accordingly. He wears a peculiar hat, very shiny, very narrow brimmed, and very arched ; he looks at life out of the lenses of a *pince-nez* ; a heavy monstache falls over his mouth,

whilst a little *mouche* (it was an imperial, you know, in the days of the Empire ; now, under the Republic, it is a *mouche*—how suggestive this is of man's fidelity !) nestles in the curve above the chin ; his cheeks are blue and shaven like those of a priest ; very loose all-round collars, with a spotted tie made into a bow, with wide pendulous ends, encircle his neck ; his cutaway coat and waistcoat

have that peculiar tightness and inelegance of the Parisian tailor ; the trousers, often wonderful in pattern (lavender and the Mackenzie tartan for choice), fit tight to the leg, and fall over a snow-white pair of gaiters ; whilst the boots are short and very broad at the toes. No wonder that men accustomed to the works of art of Poole, Lock, and Thomas regard Chichester as a foreigner. As he

walks up our morning-room he adopts a little mincing gait ; when he talks to you or sits down to read the newspaper he puts himself into attitudes ; and when he has occasion to find fault, he pouts and waves his hands like a girl. The wags at the Caravanserai have christened him Henrietta.

He is a source of great amusement to many of the members. In his diatribes against England there is no affectation of animosity ; he really and unfeignedly detests the country, its climate, institutions, and inhabitants. When he takes his walks abroad he returns to the club sick at heart and sincerely disgusted. He has seen toilettes that have made his fastidious nerves shudder as if he had listened to a false note in music ; the dust has gone into his eyes and down his throat ; the watering-carts have flooded the land where he wants to cross the road. ' *We lay the dust,*' he says, with his girlish pout ; ' *you make mud.*' The hot streets have been unshaded by trees, whilst no cool enticing *café* has been there to offer him repose and refreshment ; he has been shaken about in a dirty and miserably-hung cab ; he has been bored by the dead-level of dulness and monotony that is everywhere visible. ' *No wonder,*' he says, as he takes up the *Figaro*, ' *that you boast of your home life in this damned country of yours, for nobody who could help it would ever go out of doors.*' He dines out at the houses of his sisters, and at the houses of friends he feels bound once a year to meet, and he mourns over the bad wines he has to drink, the indigestible dishes that he has to eat, the bad ventilation of the rooms, the solemnity of the men, and the want of tact of the women. ' *To thoroughly appreciate Bignon's,*' he sneers, ' *you must have dined*

in England. To know what dress is without taste, what conversation is without sparkle, what hospitality is without grace, you must enter London society.'

We take him to the theatres ; we show him Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, we show him Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, we show him Mr. Hare, we show him Mr. Irving ; we ask him to weep over our tragedies, to laugh over our comedies, and to split his sides over our burlesques ; but his face never relaxes its rigid expression of utter boredom. ' *Mon Dieu,* and those are your actors and actresses !' he yawns, as he quits the theatre. ' *What a pity it is you do things by halves ! You get your plays from Paris ; why not get your actors ?*' If he wishes to dine away from the club, where, he plaintively asks, can he go ? At his beloved Paris he has the *Café Anglais* (I have dined with him there in No. 16—or rather sat down to dinner, for dyspepsia does not permit me to indulge—and can speak of him most favourably as a host), the *Maison Dorée*, *Bignon's*, and several other haunts well known to the French *gourmet*. ' *Whilst here,*' he cries, ' *your best restaurants, now that Francatelli is dead, would be a disgrace even to the Palais Royal.*' It is impossible to please him ; everything he sees, everything we do, everything we praise, is a mistake, and gives rise to the ridicule of Europe. Like ancient Rome and ancient Greece, like Venice and Spain, England has seen her best days, and is fast going to wreck and ruin. ' *Sapristi !*' he says, with his girlish gesticulations, ' *you are a droll people !* In your newspapers and at your clubs you imagine yourselves a powerful nation, and that your voice is a potent one in the councils of Europe. Yet cross the Channel, and what notice do you find any of the

Powers taking of the views and feeling of England? *Rien!* You are a shop, not a barrack, and what else can you expect? You look upon politics only through the medium of commercial interests, and then wonder at the decline of your national prestige. You encourage pusillanimity, and call it arbitration. You weaken strength, and call it reduction.

You impair efficiency, and call it economy. You exchange a patriotic aristocracy for a mischievous middle class, and then wonder at misgovernment. You ridicule Protection, and then wonder at commercial panics and agricultural distress. You legalise trades-unions, and then marvel at the antagonism between labour and capital. You sanction the freedom of the press,

and then are astonished at the spread of sedition. *Mon Dieu*, your country is going to the devil, and it won't be much of a catch when he gets it! Luttrell Chichester, I fear, will.

He is particularly wrath with the conduct of the English who visit his fondly cherished city. He objects to the style of dress they adopt, to their open contempt

of the manners of the country, to their arrogance, brutality, and utter want of *savoir-faire*.

'Why, if you were Germans,' he sneers, 'you could not behave worse! Why walk about the Boulevards as if you were going out cover-shooting? Why, when you dine together, talk at the top of your voice, and let all Paris know that you are English? Why

refuse to be courteous to a man or woman simply because he or she happens to stand behind a counter? Why, when shut up at a railway station waiting for your luggage, or standing at a box-office waiting for a ticket for the theatre, or at a review, or on the race-course, always insist in the loudest of tones upon the superiority of your own institutions, and make yourselves thoroughly objectionable to all around you? At Paris you are simply hated, and if it were not for your money you would be treated with marked disrespect.'

'You are quite right to stand up for Paris,' replies a youngster, who has just entered upon his forensic career as judge's marshal; 'it is the jolliest place out! If I had my way I'd be like you, and live over there. Give me an invite at Easter, Chichester.'

'Paris the jolliest place out!' sardonically laughs Chichester. 'That is the way with you young fellows. Pray what do you know of Paris? You put up at an hotel where a Parisian never enters; you walk arm-in-arm along the Boulevards, and, inspired by the romances of Paul de Kock and Xavier de Montépin, imagine that you are to enter into an intrigue with the first great lady you meet in your promenade; you drive to the Bois or up and down the Champs Elysées in a two francs and a half fly; you dine by yourselves, and drink too much at the Café Anglais or at Bignon's, and then, flushed and noisy, you sally forth to a theatre, where you don't understand the language, or to the Mabilles or the Closerie des Lilas, where you *do* understand the language, and finish your day with a supper at Brébant's, in society which even the clerk of a *notaire* would consider compromising. And then you say there is

no place like Paris, and flatter yourselves you know what life in Paris is! You bring no letters of introduction with you; you do not know a single lady of fashion to ask you to a dance or to dinner; you belong to none of the *cercles*; you are not acquainted with a single political or literary celebrity to show you any attention; and yet you return to London and say, "Awfully jolly place, Paris! Know every inch of it! Never was more amused in my life! You go and see *Niniche*."'

Chichester, however, is one of the few Englishmen who really is acquainted with Paris. He has been good enough to invite me to stay with him both at his chambers and at his charming little country seat. Under his auspices I am able to form some idea of what Parisian life is. He takes me into society, which I am not surprised to find is very different from that depicted by certain novelists and dramatic authors; at his hospitable breakfast-table one meets authors, actors, and the 'curled darlings' of the Bébés and the Jockey Club; he has introduced me at the green-room of the Français; he has obtained tickets for me to listen to debates at Versailles; and, thanks to him, I have sat amongst the crush on the admission of an Academician. He drives me to neighbouring races in his drag—driving like a Frenchman, with his arms sticking out from his sides, and his body well forward; he puts my name down as an honorary member at a *cercle*, where I can play baccarat if it pleases me to the most unlimited extent; he tells me what to see, whom to know, and what to avoid. He is as different a companion in France as a London fog is from an Italian sky. Bright, cheery, amusing, full of anecdote and geniality, he

has little in common with the discontented, dyspeptic, surly denizen of Pall Mall that he is when in England.

But to see him at his best you must stay with him at his château near Fontainebleau. There he is the complete French country gentleman, as on the Boulevards he is the complete *flâneur*. Dressed in a suit of yellow jean, with a large Leghorn straw hat on his head, he goes pottering about his trim gardens,

with their succession of terraces, formal flower-beds, mimic fountains, and yews cut into all manner of fantastic shapes, whilst the shaved poodle trots by his side; or else he pays a visit to his little home farm, well stocked with Breton cows, Auvergne sheep, pigs from Westphalia, Spanish poultry, and white huge-flanked Norman horses. He is a kind landlord, and is on excellent terms with the curé of the village, to whom his donations *pour les*

pauvres are very liberal. As becomes a Legitimist, and one on whom the pious regions of the Faubourg St. Germain smile kindly, in the country he is most respectable, and never misses attending high mass on Sundays or on the great festivals, acting as escort to some high dame engaged in collecting *une quête*. In Paris he does as he pleases, but in the country he has to set an example. When *la chasse* sets in, Chichester is in great force. In the coverts around he has plenty of birds,

but it must be admitted that the pheasants and partridges have little to fear. Not only is Chichester a wretched shot, but the guests he fills his house with are little better. His shooting-parties are very delicious. The *petits crevés* and the *gommeux*, who dawdle over breakfast, gorgeously attired in dark-green coats, black-velvet caps, jack-boots, and *couteau de chasse* at their waistbelts, are in no hurry for the sport. They chat, smoke cigarettes, look at themselves in the glass, and then,

when the morning is fast dissolving into the afternoon, make up their minds to face the cold air. Each one has his man behind him with a couple of guns; but the young Gauls are far more accustomed to the pavement of Paris than the ridge and furrow of the fields, or the yielding leafy rides in the woods. They do not attempt to

keep in line; they never think of preserving silence; they point the barrels of their breechloaders at each other with a charming contempt for the consequences of manslaughter; they blaze into a thick cover heedless of dogs, beaters, or a brother sportsman; and if they make a bag, which we should consider most moderate if it fell to one

gun, they are in ecstasies. They want female society, music, or absinthe to wake them up and give them energy; and I am sure in their heart of hearts they curse the damp, the cold, and long for the evening and to bid for the bank at baccarat. It was the same when they went out hunting. Attired in a costume something between a circus-master and an Odd Forester, they were only

happy when riding to cover or when saying charming nothings to the fair amazons who turned up at the meet; but when the hounds were thrown in by the huntsman into a furze-brake, and when the music of their tongues plainly told that the fox had been found, then the Frenchmen looked uncomfortable. They fidgeted about, altered their stirrups, and, before they had made up their minds to jump

a two-feet ditch, men, horses, and hounds were fields ahead, and our 'sportsmen' were hopelessly thrown out.

No, Chichester, *mon ami*, in spite of all your teaching, give me old England! Johnny Crapaud may be very well in his way. I grant you he is very amusing and generally very lively; but he

wants ballast, he promises more than he performs, his sincerity is not to be depended upon, he is not wholesome in many of his tastes, and he is too fond of 'a gallery' and of showing off to be really in earnest or really manly. John Bull, with all his faults, is the more sterling of the two, as he always was and always will be.

AT A BALL.

O, FACES fair are gathered there,
And Beauty scatters her rays on all;
Old loves are crossed, fresh hearts are lost
And sought for vainly everywhere
At a ball!

Whither they go we scarcely know,
For they have wandered beyond recall;
Taking a rest in many a breast,
Perhaps to perish, or perhaps to grow
At a ball!

Bright eyes glance in the mazy dance,
And soft low words are spoken withal:
Should these take root, who knows what loot
Is made in the way of hearts, by chance,
At a ball?

Do all forget, soon after the set
Has broken, and partners 'go to the wall,'
Sweet whispers low? I say, 'O no!
For *one* I heard I can hear as yet
At a ball!

And often think, do fools still drink
The nectar of honeyed words—nay gall,
That filled me then, most foolish of men,
And led me close to proposal's brink,
At a ball?

For now I see that Victorine B
Thought it a joke my heart to enthrall;
Her own was unhurt, she was only a flirt;
Alas, it was very far different with me
At a ball!

AN OSTRICH-FEATHER SALE.

'Now then, gentlemen ; lot 45. It's lot 45 that's up. And how much for it, gentlemen? 80*l*.? 80*l*. by all means. And 82-10; thank you. And 85; and 87-10; and 90. 90? Any advance on 90? Is 90 all? All? Going, then, at 90. Going at 90; going; going!' Thud.

It is 62 lbs. weight of ostrich feathers that 'go' for these ninety sovereigns — 62 lbs. weight of (technically) 'medium and short black,' 'medium and short drab,' 'mixed.' They have been imported in one 'case;' the marks of it, H. S.; the contents described indiscriminately as 'quantity.' So this species (and condition) of ostrich feather has a prime value in the home market of about 30*s*. per lb., or 1*s*. 10½*d*. per oz.; and it lets the old question of, 'Is a pound of feathers as much as a pound of lead?' be, in one sense, definitely settled. A pound of feathers is so very much more than a pound of lead, it seems absurd to consider the two substances together. Worth their weight in gold might rather be said of ostrich feathers, in contradistinction, and as proudest attribute of superiority.

The sale proceeds, with the same tit-tat-toe sort of talking, one lot being 'up' and another lot 'down,' as the talker offers them in his quick enterprise and ability; and the sale-prices vary, such 'sorts' as are styled Femina, Boos, Byock, reaching as much as 8*l*. per lb., or 10*s*. an oz., and amounting, in a 'quantity,' to purchases of as much each as 500*l*. But, ostrich-feather sale as the sale may be,

the seller has no ostrich feathers with him or near him for buyers to hang over, and to feel and to inspect and to compare. A bonded warehouse nearly a mile away is the place where the feathers are to be seen, and the place where, on its very threshold, there is the fragrance of cinnamon, cardamom, cassia, manna; there is the semblance of ivory, Japan ware, lacquered ware, as heavy wagons are standing about, yielding up huge piles of Oriental-looking bales. And on entering this bonded warehouse there are feathers enough, and in richest variety. Feather-terms, too—the strange-sounding Femina, Boos, Byock, Spadona—get short explanation; and get, as usual, considerably more suggestiveness after the explanation has come. Boos, for example, is perhaps Hottentot, perhaps Kaffir, perhaps Moorish, or a taste of the language of Griqua, Fingoe, Ashantee, with some corruption destroying its immediate recognisability. It means the feathers from the ostrich's tail, in distinction to the feathers from the wings and elsewhere. Byock, translated, means the piebald, or black-and-white, feathers that are black and white as they are naturally, without submission to African dye or preparation; and Femina and Spadona are Italian words pure. As *femmina* (its proper spelling), for the first, female; as *spadone*, for the second, a large flat sword, Spadona feathers being such feathers as are long and narrow, with sharp-pointed ends—sword-shaped, in fact, exactly—these two last 'sorts'

tell how Italian merchants originated the importation of ostrich feathers into Europe ; no matter how many centuries have passed since they sent their argosies across from Venice, say, as Antonio did, and since, on their voyages to Tripolis and Barbary, they braved 'those shallows and those flats' that might scatter their feather-ventures, as well as

'all their spices, on the stream,
And enrobe the roaring waters with their
silks.'

As for the feathers themselves, for buyers and others to 'view,' there they are in the beautiful plumes of the white ostrich (from the male bird always), long creamy tufts, handsome enough to have been chosen for the nodding plumes of Hector himself ; there they are in the beautiful plumes of the long black ostrich, from the male also ; there they are in the long 'drab' (the female), in the sword shape, in the 'cut' shape—those with their ends trimmed out, through breakage or something else ; and there they are in the short feathers of all of these ; in the medium of all of these ; in the feathers of the Cape birds, and the farmed birds, incapable of retaining the artificial 'curl' so well as the wild ; and the birds from Mogadore, from Egypt, and from Senegal. Lying safely collected there, after passing from dusky hand to dusky hand till delivered to some trader at the shore, there they are in their thousands and their tens of thousands ; tied up in big bundles, feather on feather, forming a solid block ; tied in high branching tufts, here and there upon a string, like a royal kite-tail ; lying on wooden trays raised over the ship-cases in which they have been imported ; spraying out, 'feathering' out, in all their well-known beautiful lightness, waving and nodding at the touch, and

even at the breath. And they have superb companions in the shape of thousands and of tens of thousands of other foreign birds, under the same aroma of camphor, under even the added charm of rare and lovely tint, of magnificent brilliance, of jewel-like gloss and lustre. Amongst them there are fairy humming-birds, casesful and casesful, like gems, ruby, amber, purple, emerald, gold. Amongst them there are hundreds of red tanagers, of orange tanagers, of kingfishers, as valued for their fine slenderness as for their hue ; of jay, of grebe, of parrakeets, of parrots, with no peril of beak or horror of shriek to outweigh their handsomeness any longer. Amongst them there are mimic cardinals ; also there is the pert and delicate red-headed pope ; there are cases of sunbirds, of merles, of bronze merles, of long-tailed Trojans, of resplendent Trojans, of the scarlet ibis, spread flat and hard, like opened and smoked fish, and being marvels of flaming colour ; there are cases of blue creepers, of jungle cocks, of Jaffa finches, of blue birds, flying daintily about gilt trellis-work on an Arabian night ; of yellow breasts, of lavender breasts ; of Impeyan pheasants, christened after Lady Impey, who tried to bring over and rear the beautiful bird in England ; of gorgeous Argus pheasants, owning that descriptive Nepaulese name the Mon-aul, or bird of gold. And the list is not completed even yet ; it can have a great deal put to it in addition. For example, osprey feathers, heron feathers, paddy feathers—gray paddy, white paddy, brown paddy ; 3537 magpie tails ; 346 peacock necks ; a score of birds of paradise, the price precious ; 41lbs. weight of glittering beetles ; seven-coloured finches boxes of canaries ; 317 bundles of

peacocks' eyes, the tail feathers, and superb; amputated wings; peacock hand-screens, Eastern finished; peacock body-feathers; peacock 'swords;' peacock 'fish-tails,' the 'blind' feathers, *i.e.* the eye-less, and ended 'cut,' like the cut among the ostriches; peacocks whole, in a case seven feet long, and the width proportionate, the birds perfect from beak to gleaming tail-tip, without a feather crumpled; peacock quill-dusters, being the positive quills of the peacock's tail feathers, split, and bound together with a costly handle;* ostrich skins, a slab, as it were, of delicate drab feathers grown to a ground the stiffness and hardness of a shield; vulture feathers, ennobled by the trade title of the American ostrich; egret feathers, formerly used only by royal personages and the highest nobles, and the form of the arrangement of which is still retained in the diamond egret or aigrette that decorates exclusively the head-dress of the Shah. Birds of a feather flock together here, indeed; and fine feathers make the finest birds in a bounteous and ever-wonderful creation. Here they are in choice companies, in regal assemblages; the tender dove-tints sorted, the faint greens classed, the downy blues gathered, with new places found for the deeper stronger indigos, the steel, the maroons, the violets. They bring a bewilderment of beauty, a maze of splendour, and a maze of colour. Surely it is all Solomon's, after the navy of Tarshish has reached him, bringing gold and silver, ivory and apes and peacocks. And the birds are birds

* These are for flapping and rustling, to wave off insects and move the air. They are Oriental quite, bringing the surmise whether the frail-looking and supposed sacred implements or symbols seen in slave's hands, on the Nineveh marbles, may not be thus explained.

literally. They lie with beak and wing and swelling breast, and little shelly claw, for all they have no more song in them, and no more flight or preening; but lie with their little bodies just emptied and dried, and filled with the light mockery of a pinch of cotton wool. Is it a wonder the dusky artisans of the East and the South can deliciously embroider and fresco and stain and join mosaic, and run threads of gold and crimson into never-failing harmony? With such glorious models of colour for imitation and inspiration, they could not fail to blend and merge, to subdue and keep, melting the wildest opposites into felicitous wholeness under their skilful handling. On the other hand, when remembrance comes of the dull browns and homely grays of the birds of northern latitudes, the gloom and sombreness of northern conceptions can very fairly and seriously be accounted for.

Then what, comes the wondering question, is the wealthy purpose for which these exquisite birds are here? Female fashion, settled by the enactments of *Le Follet*, on dress, on cap, on bonnet, is not responsible for all, not yet the half of them. The soldiers of the world require feathers to decorate their heads quite as much as women do. The Highland regiments, for example, create a large demand for black ostriches, remote as the connection seems; their greatest competitors in the matter being undertakers for 'high-class' funerals. Hussar troopers, again, wear the feathers of the osprey and the egret; other regiments use the flossy kinds of rhea (better known as the vulture, the American ostrich), others the polished and wavy plumage of the cock. Immense importations of birds are required also by bird-

stuffers, the naturalists ; their artistic groups, arranged with so much skill and patience, having plentiful sale as house ornaments and treasures. There are, besides, the homely purposes of light brooms and brushes ; the luxuries of fire-screens, fans, fishing-flies, arrow-ends ; there are even children's shuttlecocks, humble as this item may be ; and bouquets of finely-made flowers ; to say nothing of the tons and tons of down and feathers appropriated to beds and pillows, the whole of which are not procured by the stripping and plucking carried on at British poulterers' and at British farms. But, returning to ostrich feathers only, it shall be said that, on their arrival in this country, the first operation is to put them into sieves to shake them free from sand. It is because, as they are sold by weight, and reach, even first hand, as has been seen, as much as 10s. or more an ounce, merchants are not called upon to pay that high price for what may be styled, commercially, 'samples' of African desert or seashore. Dyeing and bleaching have to follow, unnecessary as bleaching would seem, seeing that an ostrich-feather sale includes 'white,' 'third white,' 'white Boos,' and so on, any one of which terms appears to give whiteness effectually ; but the white of the catalogue of a feather sale is not the white of merchandise ; it is a cream ; it is stained by life, by capture, by much handling ; and at the very onset bleaching, or let it be called extracting, is a work that must be done. Even for dyeing the feathers known as 'drab,' this extracting is a process that must be gone through ; without it there is no brilliance in the crimsons, purples, violets, and other dark colours for which 'drabs' are wanted ; and to man-

age it properly is a matter requiring such experience and such nicety, a proficient at it can command a salary of 500*l.* or 600*l.* a year. Lemon-juice, mixed with safflower, is one material a feather-dyer uses ; it gives him rose colour and pink. Brazil-wood gives him deep reds ; a mixture of Brazil-wood and cudbear gives him crimson ; indigo gives him blues ; turmeric, or weld, yields yellow. For bleaching, there is the familiar sulphur applied after a long steeping in soap-and-water. Subsequent to any and to every one of the processes, there has to be drying. It is performed, if there is time, by hanging in small bunches upon strings ; it is performed, if speed is the object (and it mostly is), by sticking bunches of the feathers, like outside spokes, into the tyre of a vast iron wheel, which is raised high, and turned round thus decorated at the utmost possible rapidity. Then comes the dresser's duty, as important to the future of the feather as the chemical knowledge of the dyer. It consists in opening the fibres by shaking ; in scraping the ribs with bits of glass (to give the required flexibility for shaping), and in giving the curl to the filaments, or vanes, by a particular application of a blunt knife. But let it be agreed that all this has been done, a feather even then is not a feather in the sense that has ordinary acceptation. Examine one of these, and it will be seen to be composed, artfully and skilfully, of two feathers, if not of three feathers, most insidiously and dexterously welded together. It has not the name either of a feather in the trade, it is a 'tip.' Three tips grouped together on wire stalks (as all must be stalked for millinery purposes) into the shape known

to the uncommercial as the Prince of Wales's feathers, have the distinctive name given to them of a 'plume.' It is in this form only that 'feathers' exist in merchants' warehouses, and are sent out by them to shops for sale by retail traders; and of this form it shall be said that it is an historical error to suppose it was first assumed by the Black Prince after Crecy. It was Henry, eldest son of James I., for whom it was established just as it is, within a prince's coronet; and neither were ostrich feathers first used by English nobles after that same feather-famed overthrow. They had been a cognisance of the Plantagenets for some time previously.

Now a feather, as a feather, deserves a word of its birth and lineage; to put it as a piece of passing pleasantry, Professor Huxley thinks a feather deserves two words, since he calls it, scientifically and magnificently, a 'tegumentary appendage.' Any way, a feather consists of three parts: its quill, its shaft, its vane. The quill, otherwise the barrel, is the part that goes into the bird's skin; the shaft is the part that fits into the quill or barrel, and is, in fact, the spine; the vane, otherwise beard or barb (the Italian *barba* shortened), is the part that clothes the shaft, and gives it its peculiar character and beauty. By a singular provision, the barrels of many birds are double shafted; the secondary shaft (called a plumule or accessory plume) being, though generally smaller than the primary shaft, furnished with barbs in exactly the same manner. In the curious cassowary this bountifulness is increased; there is a triple shaft. In the rhea, there is a tuft of down, in place of any repetition at all. In the waxwing, or Bohemian chatterer,

there is the peculiarity that some of the wing feathers have horny and red expansions at their tips, precisely as if wax had been dropped there in a large impressive seal. The ostrich, however, is minus this accessory plume (as are aquatic birds). Taking its feathers as a type of all other feathers, they are living parts of the bird when first formed, getting growth out of the creature by nutrient vessels; then the time comes when they can be no longer nourished, when they become atrophied, when they dry; and it is then that there ensues moulting, with all its discomfort and physical drain and effort. As this moulting is annual, and as some of the feathers grow in the year to be two feet long, an adequate estimate may be formed of the impulse of it, and of its exhausting demands. An ostrich is strong, it must be admitted, to allow for this heavy wear and tear; and it is quite clear he should be. To put his dimensions and his powers into figures, they are that his ordinary height of six feet is sometimes increased to eight feet; that he weighs three hundred pounds; that he can carry a couple of men upon his back; that he can roar as lustily as a lion, though, when he is in a rage, he can only cackle foolishly and hiss. He likes seven wives too (and all the seven at once; not one after the other has been beheaded); he can make a meal of stones;* he can rush at a speed of sixty miles an hour, outstripping an express train; he can rip open a dog with one blow of his foot easily,—has been known by the same implement to rip up a man; and even such stealthy

* To assist his giant digestive apparatus, just as smaller birds swallow sand and gravel; a physiological fact that accounts for the appetite of ostriches for pence and iron-chips when confined in dens and cages.

and powerful animals as leopards will run away at his approach, not venturing to meet the terror of his attack. Yet the poor bird has weak sides to him. He allows an African hunter to approach him, if the African decks himself out in the feathers of the ostrich family, and makes his way along with an ostrich shamble; he is idiotic enough, when he is running, to run his sixty miles in circles, and so return to the spot he started from for certain capture; he loves the comfort of company; he will stay by herds of giraffes and antelopes and quaggas; he is vegetarian; he will quench his thirst (which seldom troubles him) by eating desert gourds and melons; he will ensconce himself in a field of corn quite happily, the said field being part of a Boer farm or native settlement, and there he and his seven wives will dispose of that corn very quickly. As for the female ostrich, the current reports of her belie her scandalously. Namadig, the Arabian poet, writing, some centuries ago, compared thoughtless and selfish mankind to her, in lines that may be freely translated thus:

'Caressing strangers, kin near that should
be dear,
Untended, pining, lone,
Some live; and match the ostrich, hatch-
ing others' eggs,
Her own eggs shunned, unknown!'

But Namadig, although he lived in Arabia, and might have made accurate observation, was as wrong as anybody else. A lady ostrich shuns her eggs, it is true; but it is only in the daytime, when the sun is warm and she is not needed; as night approaches and the air grows cool, she faithfully returns. Then a lady-ostrich will hatch others' eggs, it is true, again; but it is for a better reason still. She is one of seven

wives, it must be recollected; there is only one hole made in the sand for the common nest of all of them; so if one wife is sitting it is enough, and she who sits is a better stepmother than many human stepmothers, since the eggs of her six sister-wives get as much comfort out of her as she is able to give to her own. Her method also of laying her eggs (about ten) is beautiful. She places them perfectly on end; and if she cannot wait till a sister-wife vacates the nest to let her enter, the egg she is forced to part with is scattered quite near on the sand, to be food, after the common hatching, for all the common young. There is a time when she will forsake her brood, certainly. It is if a tricking African has been near it, and if she discovers he has been by her sense of smell. Then fear for her life overpowers all other feelings (it may be); at any rate, she will never approach. But she is not often tried in this way, as the Africans have learnt how to rake for her eggs with a long stick from a long distance whilst she happens to be away, and as the bird has thus no knowledge of the robbery that has been committed upon her, she will keep using her nest, only for the eggs to be stolen again and again, and for the robber to find in it a constant source of profit.

And that an ostrich-egg is worth stealing there can be no question. Its weight is three pounds, as much as twenty hens' eggs put all together; it is its own saucepan, requiring nothing but to be stuck upright in a fire, with a hole cracked in its point for a forked stick to be thrust through to give it an occasional stir; and when it has been cooked and eaten the empty shell can be turned into a cup or basin, and in

that form have long life and much utility. But never, it must be conceded, does the ostrich furnish agreeable food. It is said that Heliogabalus, 'the imperial beast and glutton,' had the brains of six hundred ostriches served up as one of his fabulous dishes; it is said, too, there was a race of people called the 'Struthophagi' (from the Latin for the bird, *struthio camelus*), for the reason that they had such high enjoy-

ment of its flesh and blood. But, as a fact, ostrich-meat is tough, and were it not for the beauty of ostrich-feathers, leading up, as far as England is concerned, to an ostrich-feather sale, as at the beginning of this sketch described, the ostrich would never be caught, and never be cultivated. It is a matter of being pleased with a feather, which, in this case, to the feather-owner, chances to be lucky.

ANSWER TO THE SPECIAL DOUBLE ACROSTIC (No. XV.).

1. V A U N T
2. I N G H I R A M I
3. I S H M O N I E

Explanatory Notes.—Light 1. For van, or first part (Johnson's Dictionary, &c.). 2. See Isaac D'Israeli's *Curiosities of Literature*. 3. Moore, *Lalla Rookh*.

Correct answers to the above have been received from Araba, Bon Gualtier, C O M, Kanitbeko, Mungo-Puss-Tory, and Shaftan.

Another Special Acrostic is given for these six solvers, who are requested to take note that answers to this Acrostic must be delivered at 188 Fleet-street by the first post on February the 6th, and that no alternative word or words will be allowed.

SPECIAL DOUBLE ACROSTIC (No. XVI.).

(For the Six Solvers who have tied.)

THIS, this, you seek, by just ambition spurred—
Who would be second, or yet humbler third?

I.

Of many singers in an age long past
The vulgar lot decided this came last.

II.

The play's the thing; but as for her, I'm certain
I was right to strangle her behind the curtain.

III.

Its title to distinction—fair requital—
Is, that it gives distinction to a title.

IV.

He gave—what some might think a shade unpleasant—
A brother-tar a coffin for a present.

V.

Of mood uncertain, one might say morose,
He raised a smile, though not himself jocose.
Died about seventeen hundred eighty-three;
His name I tell not, rather R.I.P.

THETA.

Answers to the above, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of LONDON SOCIETY, 188 Fleet-street, E.C., must be received not later than February the 6th.

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LONDON SOCIETY.

MARCH 1879.

MRS. LANCASTER'S RIVAL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS IN HER OWN CHATEAU.'

CHAPTER IX.

CARWESTON.

IN hours of reflection afterwards, Dick was sorry that he had betrayed himself to Randal Hawke. But after all it did not seem to matter much. Randal was so seldom there, and had plenty to interest him without interfering in Dick's affairs. He had received his old acquaintance very kindly, considering the cool terms that they were on years ago. Altogether Dick felt justified in putting Randal out of his head.

For some days after this he haunted Flora with a persistency that sometimes seemed to worry her a little, though by degrees she resigned herself, and let him be as tame as he pleased. It was the old story over again. Dick following her about everywhere, in expeditions to Morebay, in country walks, meeting her in the streets, paying her constant visits at home. People talked, and their talk soon reached Miss Northcote. But her eyes and ears had been open enough all along, and she was not surprised, and only sorry that she had given Dick credit for better things. Her manner to him grew insensibly colder. Dick, like a sulky boy, said nothing, but walked off to Rose Cottage for consolation.

VOL. XXXV. NO. CCVII.

One morning Miss Northcote was going down a lane towards Fore-street, when she saw these two coming up together. They were talking rather earnestly, and did not see her till she was close upon them. Then she heard Flora say to Dick, in a quick undertone, 'Here is your aunt. You must go with her.'

'Not I,' was Dick's answer.

Miss Northcote felt a great deal of disgust and anger. She walked on with a perfectly grave face, and was passing them with a slight bow, when Mrs. Lancaster stopped and spoke.

'Miss Northcote, I hope you don't think that I am taking your nephew away from you? He is very unmanageable. I can't make him see his duty.'

Dick was going to join in with some sort of joke against himself, but looked at his aunt and held his tongue. Nobody could speak good-humouredly in the presence of that look of scorn, which curled Miss Northcote's lip and slightly elevated her dark brows.

'I can only wish my nephew to please himself, Mrs. Lancaster, thank you,' she answered; and had passed on before Flora could reply.

'You are very stupid,' she said to Dick. 'You are making your relations angry, and all for nothing.'

'I will be sure that it is for nothing before I trouble myself about that,' said Dick. 'Thank goodness, I am not responsible to any of them.'

'I care about it, if you don't,' said Flora rather sadly. 'I should like to explain to Miss Northcote that all this is no doing of mine. She does not understand, and I can't wonder at her being vexed.'

'O, she has a temper,' said Dick; 'but she is the best creature in the world, and will get over it all right, if you let her alone. I'll settle it with her one of these days.'

That afternoon Miss Northcote ordered her pony-carriage, and drove away through the lanes to Carweston. Long before she reached it they became very narrow, with high banks covered with fern and wild flowers; here and there a gate gave a view of lovely varied slopes, the Mora, and the hills beyond. It was almost an adventure to drive down the last lane, between high walls of rock covered all over with soft green lichen where the ferns did not grow; here every kind to be found in that country had a niche to itself in the ragged edges and clefts of the rocks. Bright sprays of wild strawberries looked out amongst them, and the great clustering leaves of the primroses made one think of spring. Down the side of the lane a tiny stream went trickling over the pebbles; the larger ferns drooped over it, with leaves as well as roots drinking it in. Between one wall and the other there was only just room for the carriage-wheels.

This romantic lane was not the only approach to Carweston; at the further end it opened on a wide road, leading straight into the village. But the short cut through the lanes was much more used by

the St. Denys people, except by the more nervous of them, to whom the idea of meeting anything in these lanes was a terror.

The low gray church-tower and the few stone houses of Carweston stood at the head of a wide valley, down which a trout-stream ran to join the Mora. The broad slopes of the valley lay smiling in the sun; there were cornfields, and hayfields where they were carrying; orchards full of fruit, strawberry-gardens that scented the air. A steamer and two or three small boats were passing swiftly on the calm expanse of the river; beyond lay the moors and hills in a warm purple mist. It did Kate Northcote good, as she looked at it all, and even suggested this, quite without any concurrence of hers—if there was so much good in everything, might there not be a little in Mrs. Lancaster?

'No,' said Kate; 'horrid scheming woman! She has been spinning her webs for Dick all this time, and has caught him, poor silly fellow. I can't bear to think of it.'

A little way beyond the church, a wall hung with masses of ivy skirted the garden of Carweston House. Then there were two square pillars, with a gate between them, and a solemn dragon sitting upright on each. One of them had lost his paws, and was a piteous sight; but some kind sprays of ivy were running up to offer themselves as a screen. Facing this gate stood the solid old house, built of great blocks of stone, which as the years passed over them had taken all manner of colours. The house was low and large, and the ivy had all its own way with one side; on the other a great-flowered magnolia and a crimson rose climbed up in beautiful rivalry.

Miss Northcote crossed the

large furnished hall, where all the brown old pictures hanging round looked down on her as a friend, and where she had often sat listening to Anthony, as he played on his organ at the further end. The drawing-room, into which she went, was one of those rooms that one loves at first sight, feeling that they could never be anything but homelike. It was low and large and almost square; the crimson carpet was a little worn, the furniture was old-fashioned, and the walls were covered with pictures. At one end there was a group of musical instruments—a piano, a harp, a violoncello in its case. It was not till one had been in the room some minutes that one realised how full it was of beautiful things; they did not obtrude themselves, but seemed to belong to the place. Every ornament was good and curious: the old gilded clock in the corner was a real Louis Quatorze; the pieces of Dresden and Chelsea china stood quietly here and there, as if they had no idea of their own value, no ambition of velvet mounts or glass cases, but were too happy to attend on Mrs. Strange, and to be broken in her service, if the Fates would have it so. But the jewels of the room were three old Italian devotional pictures, which hung together near the piano at the end. One of them, an Annunciation, Anthony always declared to be a Fra Angelico, though he had no satisfactory proof of it. He said that no other mortal man could have painted the face of that angel; it must have been given in answer to the prayers of a saint.

Mrs. Strange was generally to be found in her drawing-room. She was there when Kate came in, and met her with eager welcoming hands. Kate kissed her old friend, and sat down by her on

a large soft sofa near the fireplace.

Mrs. Strange was a small slender old woman, with delicate features, and bright eyes full of expression. She had known Kate Northcote all her life, and was very fond of her. After they had been talking for a few minutes she laid her hand on hers, and said,

‘What is it, Kate? You are in some trouble, I can see. I hope you came to tell me all about it.’

‘Yes, I did,’ said Kate, the tears rushing into her eyes. ‘Not that any one can help me, dear Mrs. Strange—not even you. It is about Dick.’

‘I like Dick,’ said Mrs. Strange. ‘He is one of my boys. I won’t hear that he has done anything wrong. But I love you better still; so tell me.’

‘Well—it is that Mrs. Lancaster,’ said Kate. At the obnoxious name the colour rose in her cheeks, and all the anger that had half faded away came back again. ‘He is flirting with her again, just as he did before; but it is much worse now. I don’t know how to save him now.’

‘O Dick, for shame!’ said Mrs. Strange. ‘Is it want of amusement? I was a flirt myself, you know, once, and I quite remember the feeling. Send him to me to be scolded. It is a cruel thing. I thought he had too much heart for it. When he was a boy, of course, he fancied himself in love; but it can’t be that now.’

‘But I am afraid it is.’

‘No, my dear, I don’t think so,’ said Mrs. Strange decidedly. ‘Dick has too much sense to fall really in love out of his own station. No; he is behaving very badly. The poor thing is a widow, which makes it worse. It is simply for amusement.’

Kate shook her head.

'I don't think you need pity her: she is quite able to take care of herself. No, it is not mere flirting on Dick's part. He is unhappy and disturbed in mind. He either is, or thinks himself, in love. Of course if she can marry him, she will.'

'And if Dick has led her to expect it, he can't draw back without dishonour,' said Mrs. Strange, half to herself.

'O, you don't know what you are saying!' cried Kate, in great distress.

'Kate, I know that if all men and women were bound by one high sense of honour, there would be no foolish flirtations, no disappointments, no broken hearts, none of the sad stories that one hears every day. Very few people think of it nowadays, but I used to be taught that a lady or a gentleman never raised false hopes—if they did, they held themselves bound to fulfil them. I was a flirt once—for of course I thought these notions exaggerated—and I had very good reason to repent.'

'But, dear Mrs. Strange, Dick may have done wrong, but I can't give him up to that. If he marries this woman, it must be against my will,' exclaimed Kate. 'It would be a terrible thing for us all; and what would it be for him, poor boy, when he woke from his dream? No! I must break through it if I can.'

'Lecture Dick as much as you please,' said Mrs. Strange. 'If he still has room to draw back, by all means let him do it. But if his honour is engaged in the affair, he had better carry it through than give that up. If it was my own son I should say the same. I am very sorry for you, Kate.'

So they went on talking; Kate Northcote trying to persuade her-

self that Mrs. Strange's ideas were far too exalted for this world, and yet knowing all the time, in the nobleness of her own nature, that her old friend was right.

'Here is Anthony coming through the garden,' said Mrs. Strange, after a time. 'We have talked about this enough for the present. You must not let it weigh on your mind too much. Only have it out with Dick as pleasantly as you can.'

'It was a pity that he ever came home,' said Kate despondingly.

'Not at all. He might have got into scrapes out there. Don't be anxious. He won't be far wrong in the end, if he only keeps on the straight road and in the daylight.'

Anthony came in hot and tired from walking; but his first anxiety was to show Miss Northcote some stone knives that had been found in a quarry near Carweston.

'How are they at Pensand?' said his mother, after he had talked about these for some minutes. 'At least, how is the poor little prisoner, for I care about nobody else?'

'Miss Ashley?' said Kate, rather surprised, and looking from Mrs. Strange to Anthony.

He had just dropped into an armchair, with his long legs stretched out and his arms folded. He made an odd face and shook his head.

'I shall have to run away with her. I must carry her off one of these days. It is unbearable. She talks to me; she tells me that she is moped to death. "My blessed child," said I to her, "had I but wings, I'd take you for a long flight where no guardian could dream of overtaking us. We would hover over Pensand a few minutes, for the sake of the bird's-eye view, and then away to

the West." "That would be too delightful," said she, and there was a tear under the smile.'

'But that was naughty of you,' said Mrs. Strange. 'You only make her more restless and discontented.'

'Perhaps so. But I never will acquiesce in tyranny. To me there is nothing more terrible than the content of a slave. A prisoner who does not wish for freedom—ah, that is a depth indeed.'

'Does he startle you, Kate?' said Mrs. Strange.

'Not by saying that. I quite feel the same. But when I was at Pensand, Miss Ashley seemed so very happy, on such good terms with the General. I have not seen her since. I'm afraid I have not thought about her much. She interests you, then, Anthony?'

'A butterfly struggling from the chrysalis,' said Anthony, in a low voice. 'A child still, that would be happy and adventurous like other children, if it could. A mind clear from suspicion, a heart full of faith in its fellow-creatures, and love for them, who have never fed it on anything but husks. Has that an uninteresting sound?'

'No, indeed. Is she all that, poor girl? And is she so very dull at Pensand?'

'She is alone. She knows every yard inside the gates, and the General forbids her to go outside them. He tells me she is shy, and does not wish to make acquaintance. Poor Queen Mab!'

'What can be the General's reason, I wonder?' said Miss Northcote. 'Has Randal been there much? Dick met him in the village not long ago.'

'Randal!' said Anthony, suddenly springing out of his chair. As he stood before Kate, drawing himself up to his full height, she

could not help looking at him with something like admiration. His face, his whole bearing, seemed on fire with enthusiastic indignation. 'Do you mean it, Kate? Do you think the old General could be such a scoundrel? Randal! She has only seen him once; but she dislikes him, she shrinks from him; and no wonder. If I thought that any such diabolical plot existed—'

'Patience, my dear Anthony,' said Mrs. Strange.

'No more patience for me, mother, in such a case as that.'

'What makes you dislike Randal so much?' said Kate. She was afraid she thought it only too likely that General Hawke meant the heiress for his son. 'Is there any harm in him?'

'Harm! I hate him,' said Anthony.

'Rector, it is a good thing that your people can't hear you,' said Mrs. Strange.

'Mother, the whole parish knows, I hope, that I hate rascality. Harm in Randal, Kate? There is nothing that I could lay to his charge in so many words, except being an insolent snob. But don't men's faces tell you their characters? Did you ever like Randal?'

'Never very much. Though I must confess that I always thought him good-looking. But I have not seen him for some time.'

'You never liked him; that is enough,' said Anthony, who was gradually coming down into his natural manner. 'My mother never liked him. What is to be said for a man, when two good women and a young girl are taught by their own heaven-born instinct to dislike him?'

He threw himself back in his chair again, leaned his head on his hand, and seemed deep in thought, from which he was roused a few

minutes later by his mother's voice.

'Anthony, give Kate her tea. And go and get some flowers for her.'

Mrs. Strange always ruled the talk in her own house, and never allowed a disagreeable subject to go on long. She made both Kate and Anthony understand that she would have no more at present of their respective grievances. They must make themselves agreeable; and so they did, both loving her dearly, and thinking her the wisest and best woman in the world.

CHAPTER X.

THE BRACELET.

MISS NORTHCOTE was not able that day to have it out with Dick, for she hardly saw him after she got home. He went to dine with some people at Morebay, and was to stay all night, and go with them the next day to a cricket-match. Thus his aunt had plenty of time for making up her mind what she would say to him.

That next day was Saturday. Captain Cardew came home early from the dockyard, and, having enjoyed his after-dinner nap in the parlour, joined his wife and daughter in the drawing-room. Something had been brewing in the Captain's head for several days, and he thought it would be as well to clear the air before Sunday. Thinking Flora quite old enough to manage her own affairs, he had said nothing to his wife in private, and Mrs. Cardew, though she had seen for several days that he was put out, had not asked him why. The Captain generally smoked away his whims in time.

He came into the room, and

found his wife working in the window, and Flora reading a letter, which she folded up and put into her pocket as he entered.

'Is that from Dick Northcote? Can't he go away for a day without writing to you?' said Captain Cardew.

'No. From one of my friends,' answered Flora, a shade of annoyance crossing her fair face.

She had always been independent at home, but since she came back a widow her parents had been made to understand that all her affairs, her friendships, her correspondence, were completely her own. They thought this the right thing, and seldom interfered with her in any way; it was a singularly peaceful household.

'I'm glad to hear it,' said the Captain. 'Stay where you are, Flora,' as she was slowly rising from her chair. 'I want to speak to you.'

'Well?' said Flora, sitting down again.

Captain Cardew began walking up and down the room. Flora glanced at her mother with elevated eyebrows. Mrs. Cardew shook her head violently, to show her perfect ignorance of what might be the matter.

'Did you say you wished to speak to me?' said Flora, after waiting a few moments.

'Yes,' said the Captain. 'I have a question to ask. What is to be the end of all this nonsense between you and young Northcote?'

'What an odd question, father! I hardly know how to answer it. But I suppose all nonsense comes to the same end,' said Flora, smiling a little.

'You think, then, that he is only playing with you. And do you suppose that I am going to put up with that?'

'I don't exactly mean that.

You had better not distress yourself. I can settle it.'

'No. That is just the sort of thing I don't mean to stand. Though you are Mrs. Lancaster you are under your father's roof, and I tell you I will not have these doings, unless there is some good reason for them. I shall speak to the fellow myself, and find out what his intentions really are.'

'For goodness' sake, don't do that!' said Flora.

'I shall, though. I suppose you think your chance won't be improved by being taken up by your old father. I shall speak in a louder voice than—than General Hawke would, I daresay, and maybe use some rough words.'

'O Captain, do hold your tongue! You're making Flora quite ill!' exclaimed Mrs. Cardew, jumping up and hurrying to her daughter.

Flora had flushed crimson, and made a little start, as if she meant to run out of the room. But then she paused and lay back, closing her eyes, as if there was nothing for it but to hear her father to the end.

'A couple of geese!' said the Captain angrily to himself. 'Sit down,' to his wife; 'there is nothing the matter with her, and I have not done yet. Listen to a few words of sense, Flora, if you can.'

Flora opened her eyes, and bent her head.

'You don't seem to take it in,' said the Captain, 'but it is a very awkward thing for you to be run after by a fellow like that. It was a different thing when he was a schoolboy. I tell you, unless I am convinced that something is to come of it, I won't have it at all. I'll let him know that he must behave to you as he would to a lady of his own rank.'

'Dear me! So he does. I am quite able to take care of myself, I assure you,' said Flora. 'Pray leave me to settle it.'

'Then you are quite sure that he means to marry you?' said the Captain fiercely.

'If he has the chance, I suppose he does. I don't know, really, father. I wish you would not make such a fuss about nothing.'

'Nothing!' repeated the Captain. 'I don't consider it nothing. It is not nothing, and so Mr. Dick Northcote shall find. You are a great fool for having encouraged him at all, but you must have somebody dangling after you. I thought you had had enough of these gentlemen. You would not get on with his relations any more than with poor Lancaster's. Worse, for people down here are three times as proud. I don't believe they would acknowledge you at all. Miss Northcote bowed to me the other day, but as coldly as if she wasn't quite sure who I was. If you like that sort of thing, I don't. Nor does your mother, good-natured as she is.'

'Well,' said Flora, with a sigh, 'what do you want me to do?'

Before the Captain had answered this question, which seemed to puzzle him a little, there was a ring, Dick's ring, as Flora knew very well. She smiled rather oddly, and glanced at her mother. Would her father attack him on the spot? She hardly thought so, in spite of all his talk. But after a minute's delay the maid came in and brought her a small parcel.

'Mr. Northcote left it for you, ma'am,' she said.

Flora held it in her hand for a minute and looked at it. It was smartly done up in white paper, with her name on it in Dick's untidy straggling hand, and his initials, 'R. N.,' in the corner.

'Goodness!' said Mrs. Cardew,

under her breath, 'it looks like wedding-cake.'

'Well, are you going to open it?' said the Captain.

Flora opened it, and there appeared a dark-red leather case, which in its turn revealed a very pretty gold bracelet set with turquoises. In Flora's face, as she looked, were both dismay and amusement.

'How could he be so silly?' she said, half to herself.

But the amusement fled when she looked at her father. He walked up to her, took the case out of her hand, and shut it with a sounding snap, just as Mrs. Cardew was bursting into admiration.

'Answer me two questions, Flora,' he said. 'Are you engaged to young Northcote?'

'No, father, of course not.'

'Are you sure that you ever will be?'

'No.'

'You accept no presents from him till you are. Is this the first?'

'Yes. What are you going to do with it?'

'I am going after him with it—this moment. I mean him to know what I think. So you may say good-bye to your bracelet. Leave it there. I'm going to put my other coat on.'

Mrs. Cardew listened with horrified eyes, Flora without remark or remonstrance.

'My darling child,' said the mother, when Captain Cardew had left the room, 'I can't think what makes your father so violent. Are you very much vexed, dear? Will poor Dick be angry?'

'I daresay he will,' said Flora. 'Yes, I'm vexed too; I detest explosions. I could have managed it all so quietly myself.'

'Of course there can't be a doubt about him,' said Mrs. Cardew. 'I do call it nonsense. Why,

he worships the very ground you walk on.'

'If he does, it is all the more unpleasant that he should be bullied into saying so,' said Flora.

'To be sure, dear. But it's no use talking to your father. Men are so stupid, when once they take a thing into their heads. Dear me, how I should have liked to see you in that bracelet! Just try it on. What good taste he has!'

'No, mother, let it alone,' said Flora.

Dick, meanwhile, after leaving his precious parcel, had not gone home, but away for a walk into the country. He was inclined to put off facing his aunt as long as possible. So it happened that Captain Cardew, arriving very red and bristling at Miss Northcote's house, was shown into the drawing-room, where she was sitting alone. She was very much surprised to see her visitor, and perhaps looked so. The Captain made her a low bow.

'I beg your pardon, ma'am,' he said. 'There is some mistake. I called to see your nephew.'

'He is not come in yet, but I expect him soon,' said Kate. 'Will you sit down and wait for him, Captain Cardew? or can I give him any message?'

Upon this, Captain Cardew dived into his pocket for poor Dick's parcel, roughly folded up again, and presented it to her with another bow.

'What is it?' said Kate, holding it and looking at it doubtfully.

'It is a bracelet,' said the Captain rather hoarsely.

'A bracelet,' she said, with a strong inclination to smile. 'Am I to give it to my nephew?'

'If you will take the trouble to read what is written on that paper, you will see that it is addressed by Mr. Northcote to my daughter,'

answered the Captain, with extreme politeness.

'O!' said Kate. She began to see how things were tending. Laying the parcel on the table, she looked Captain Cardew straight in the face. When one pair of honest eyes meets another, there need not be many round-about ways between them. 'Pray sit down, and make me understand all about this,' she said frankly.

'I have nothing to say that will please you, Miss Northcote,' said the old sailor, but he obeyed her and sat down.

The presence of a lady was curiously taming; his wife and daughter would hardly have known him again. But he was not awkward, for the good breeding that the sea gives her sons never deserted him. Kate, not knowing what was before her, was the more uneasy of the two. There was a flush of excitement in her cheeks, and her heart was beating very fast; what had Dick been doing?

'Mr. Northcote left that parcel at my door twenty minutes ago,' said Captain Cardew. 'But I have to say to him that as long as he is not openly engaged to my daughter, she will accept no presents from him. I'm sorry to mention the words, ma'am, for I know they must annoy you. But it seems as if that was what he meant.'

'You think so?' said Kate, and she sighed.

'I like the young fellow,' the Captain went on, warming to his subject. 'I think it is a pity that he should be so soft. People ought to marry in their own rank of life. My daughter has married out of hers once, and I suppose she may be inclined to do so again, though the first was none too pleasant. I tell her she will repent; but young people are wil-

ful. You knew about all this, ma'am?'

'Of course, I could not help knowing something of it,' said Kate. 'But Dick has said nothing to me, and I did not know it had gone so far.'

'It's a great annoyance to you, of course,' said the Captain.

'I can't pretend to be pleased,' she answered quietly.

'Well, I came here to tell young Mr. Northcote that I would have no more shilly-shallying. Either he engages himself to my daughter, or he gives her up at once, and we see the last of this dawdling about together. It is not respectable, I say, and though she is a widow, I suppose she is still my child. Now will you let an old fellow give you a word of advice?'

'Go on, please, Captain Cardew,' said Kate, bowing her head.

'You don't want this affair to go any further. Neither do I. There is no good in it for either of them. When you speak to your nephew about it, tell him that his wisest course will be to sheer off altogether. Then he'll please Flora's relations and his own.'

Kate sat silent for a minute or two, considering.

'Thank you,' she said at last. 'It is very good of you to say that. But I don't know that a thing like this can be settled so easily. What would Mrs. Lancaster think of him, if, after going so far, he was to sheer off suddenly?'

She smiled a little, and looked at the Captain.

'Disagreeable for both sides, of course,' said he. 'But people who flirt must take the consequences. Better for Flora to be disappointed now than afterwards. She has a spirit of her own, and it would hurt her, Miss Northcote, if you were to take no notice of her. I

told her that was what she would have to expect. Ladies like you are proud, you see.'

'Proud! Well, perhaps I am,' said Kate, 'but in a different sense from yours. Much too proud, Captain Cardew, to wish my nephew to behave dishonourably to your daughter, if he has led her to think that he is really attached to her.'

The Captain stared, and made no answer. After a moment's pause Kate went on, speaking with an effort, but very earnestly.

'And too proud to insult Dick by refusing to acknowledge his wife. That would be a great cruelty, a great wrong, both to him and her and myself. You may be quite easy about that.'

'I beg your pardon, ma'am, for expecting anything else,' said the Captain, getting up and bowing. 'You have shown me what a true lady is. Good-evening to you.'

'I will talk to Dick when he comes in,' said Miss Northcote, 'and he shall do what he wishes and thinks right. In the mean while, won't you take the bracelet back? It will vex him to see it here.'

'Thank you, I won't,' said the Captain. 'I don't care if he is vexed. People have to be brought to their senses.'

'Very well, as you please,' said Kate.

As he turned to leave the room she held out her hand to him with a smile. He took the tips of her fingers, held them for an instant, and dropped them with another bow. Then he went out, in a much better temper, leaving the bone of contention, represented by Dick's unfortunate parcel, on Miss Northcote's table.

Dick came in presently, and sat down in his favourite place by the window. His aunt went up to him, and laid her hand on his shoulder.

'My Dick, I want you to behave like a man.'

'Who says I don't?' asked Dick, in a rather antagonistic way. 'Now I'm going to catch it,' he thought; yet his aunt's face and manner were so reassuringly gentle as to puzzle him.

'Like a gentleman, perhaps, I ought to say,' said Kate. 'I want you to be open with me, and to tell me all about—Mrs. Lancaster. How long is it since you found you couldn't trust me?'

A minute or two of dead silence. Dick sat staring out of the window.

'Hang it!' he said. 'I'm in such an awful fix. I thought you would never bear to hear of it. You would laugh; no, you'd be desperately cross, for it is no laughing matter.'

'I shall neither laugh nor be cross. Perhaps I know as much as you can tell me—except what the fix is—for it all seems to me plain sailing enough.'

'I'm a fool, you know,' said Dick.

'Suppose we grant that. I don't want to hear about foolishness. What is it that you seriously mean to do?'

'Aunt Kate, you are too hard on a fellow.'

'Don't be weak. I am prepared to hear that you are engaged to Flora Lancaster. Am I right?'

'Not quite that.'

'Ought you to be?'

'What on earth do you mean? You don't think I ought.'

'I have something to tell you,' said Kate; and standing there she told him of Captain Cardew's visit, of the returned bracelet, of what the Captain had said, and what she had said to him. 'I will hide nothing from you,' she said. 'You know enough of the world to judge for yourself. I should like to know what your feeling is

with regard to her; what you mean to do.'

Kate emphasised her speech now and then by a little pressure of Dick's shoulder. There was some uncertainty in her voice, and she found it difficult to remember that she was not talking to a schoolboy.

'Well, now,' said Dick suddenly, 'you understand the awful fix I'm in—or was in till you said all that. I thought you hated the very idea so thoroughly, that I didn't like to breathe it to you; and all the while I kept on getting deeper and deeper in. I hate rows, and I thought there would be such a row if I asked her. I thought you would shut your doors on me, perhaps cut me off with a shilling. And you don't mind it after all? You are a brick!'

'Then what did you mean to do? How did you expect it to end?'

'I don't know,' said Dick. 'I enjoyed to-day, and didn't think about to-morrow. Fancy the old Captain turning crusty like that!'

'He was quite right. Does Mrs. Lancaster share your happy indifference to to-morrow?'

'Pretty well, I think. Generally,' said Dick, becoming a little doubtful, as he remembered some irritable moments of Flora's, some clouds athwart the smiles.

'I hardly believe that,' said Miss Northcote. 'Now tell me—if any friend of yours was in the same case, had paid Mrs. Lancaster all the attention you have paid her, had said the same things to her, would you think him justified in drawing back now and going no further?'

'As you ask me, I can't say that I should.'

'Then take the same rule for yourself,' said Miss Northcote sadly. 'I don't know whether you

really care for her, or whether it is only a fancy for a pretty face. At any rate, after all I have heard, I think you are bound to ask her. Does she care for you?'

'I don't know,' said Dick. 'I'm not sure. I hope she does, for the more I'm with her the more charming I think her. She was my fate, you see. But you—won't you hate it horribly?'

'We won't enter into that. I'll behave as well as I can.'

'O, bother! If it makes you miserable—' said Dick penitently.

'My dear old fellow, I can't be miserable, as long as I feel that you are doing right,' said Kate, with a great deal of feeling in her voice. She bent over Dick and kissed him on the forehead. Then she went away to her own room, and what she did there can be best imagined by a mother whose son has disappointed her.

CHAPTER XI.

IN THE COMBE.

DICK went about whistling the next day as if a load had been taken off his shoulders. He did not try his aunt's generosity by talking of Flora, but was at his very best and pleasantest all the morning. Though she could not be sorry for the change, it made her a little sadder; that her dear boy should be so thrown away was indeed a trial hard to bear.

It was Sunday, and the whole Cardew party were at church in the morning. Dick made no attempt to join them in walking up the hill. Miss Northcote could not help noticing that Mrs. Lancaster looked pale and depressed, and wondered what the reason of this might be, but did not say anything to Dick about it. She guessed that he would go to Rose

Cottage in the afternoon, and that his fate would be settled before night.

About four o'clock Dick came into the drawing-room, where his aunt was reading, and, after fidgeting about for a few minutes, suddenly spoke.

'Look here, aunt Kate, I want to thank you. You're behaving nobly.'

He paused, with a nervous laugh.

'Never mind ; don't talk about it,' said Kate, as cheerfully as she could.

'I know you think it a fearful sacrifice,' Dick went on. 'But you'll change your mind before long. You'll find that Flora is as good as—'

'As she is lovely. Very well. I hope so. And I hope, dear Dick, that she won't find she has made an equally fearful sacrifice. Everybody might not enjoy life in the colonies, even with you. Now get along, and don't provoke me any more.'

'O, it's no use talking to you,' said Dick, half inclined to be angry at being laughed at.

It certainly was hard to have the expression of his finest feelings nipped in the bud. He really was grateful to his aunt, and wanted to tell her so. But Kate was only human after all, and could not yet bear to enter into Flora's praises. The idea of Dick's sacrifice, too, coming from himself, was almost too funny. Martyrs of that kind did not generally go smiling and whistling to the stake, Kate thought.

Dick walked away to Rose Cottage, at first not quite so cheerful. But he had recovered his spirits by the time he got there. The maid dashed cold water upon him by answering 'No' to his inquiry whether Mrs. Lancaster was at home.

'Not at home ! Are you sure ?' said Dick incredulously.

Mrs. Cardew just then looked out of the parlour, and, seeing him, came forward to the door. She was blushing and smiling, and very nervous. Her agitation had the contrary effect on Dick, fortunately, and he shook hands with her in quite a cool every-day fashion.

'Mrs. Lancaster is out?' he said, in a louder voice than usual, the idea having just dawned on him that Captain Cardew meant to forbid him the house, and that Flora might be locked up somewhere.

'The old donkey ! Does he think I shall stand that ?' thought Dick, and he looked rather fiercely at poor unoffending Mrs. Cardew.

'Well, yes, she is out,' said she anxiously. 'But won't you come in, Mr. Northcote ?'

'No, I won't, thank you,' said Dick. 'Perhaps she is gone to church somewhere ?'

'No. We have no afternoon service, you see.'

Dick's brow had clouded over a good deal ; he hated small obstacles and contradictions. Flora's mother grew rather frightened as she looked at him.

'I don't suppose, Mr. Northcote,' she began timidly, 'that Flora would mind my telling you where she is. She took a book—she was restless in the house, poor dear—and I believe she went down to the Combe. She might not like to be interrupted by everybody, but surely she couldn't mind you.'

'I hope not. Thank you, Mrs. Cardew,' said Dick. His face cleared up at once, and he was turning away, when she stepped out into the garden after him.

'You must excuse my mentioning it,' she said, 'and Flora would be angry ; but I have known you

so long, Mr. Dick, haven't I? Now I do hope you're not vexed at what the Captain did yesterday; he is so headstrong, you know, and he meant it for the best. We have had so many anxieties about Flora, and when it is one's only child, one can't help fretting.'

'The Captain was quite right,' said Dick. He coloured scarlet, but smiled very pleasantly at Mrs. Cardew. 'I hope he will have no more cause to complain of me. Good-bye.'

One would think it was always summer at St. Denys. It has its full share of rough weather, though, and I have heard people say that it rains there more than in most places. But that summer, when Dick Northcote was amusing himself at home, and Mabel Ashley was shut up within Pensand gates, was singularly brilliant and lovely.

This Sunday afternoon was hot and sleepy and still; the air was heavy, the sun shone through a faint yellow mist, under which the trees seemed to take strange colours, and sounds from a distance fell deadened on one's ear.

Dick hurried down the lane to the Combe. It was a hollow path like a tube, perhaps four feet wide, completely arched over with ivy-bound boughs of low gray old trees, and here and there a bush of honeysuckle hanging so low that his head brushed it as he walked. Half-way down the hill the hedges disappeared, and the path branched out into a steep, slippery, rugged descent of bare granite rock. Below this was some more lane with a low stone wall, bounding a small green field on the left, with a donkey grazing in it, which sloped down to the water. Dick passed this and walked on round the head of the

creek, past the foot of another lane, almost as narrow and rough, which was supposed to be a cart-road, the only approach to a little untidy whitewashed farm that nestled among trees half-way up the head of the Combe. A little further on he got down upon the rocks. The tide was full, and the water was lazily gliding in and lapping against the stones. It was the only thing that moved or spoke in the Combe; the trees and long grass and flowering bushes on its steep sides lung motionless; the long dark ridges of rock showed their teeth in silence.

The stillness was so intense in the yellow misty glow that Dick stood still, doubting if Flora was there; he could almost have heard her breathe. As he stood hesitating, she suddenly rose up from behind a rock not three yards away. With her green and white summer dress, her golden hair, her fair transparent skin, she might have been the nymph of the rivers, disturbed by a rash mortal from her peaceful dreaming on the shore.

'I heard you coming down,' she said, without any particular pleasure in look or tone. 'Who told you I was here?'

'Your mother. Don't be angry with her,' said Dick.

'She little knew what she was doing,' said Flora, half to herself.

'Didn't she, do you think?' said Dick, as he made his way round over the rock ledges to the place where she was standing.

She had risen from one of these steps or ledges, just above high-water mark, in a corner sheltered from sight by a projection of the rocky bank. She now sat down again, and Dick, as he took his place beside her, noticed a packet of letters tied up with ribbon in a little cleft close by. She was watching him, saw his eyes light

on them, and smiled slightly and rather sadly.

'All letters from one friend,' she said. 'Do you possess such a good correspondent?'

'I don't, indeed,' said Dick. 'One leaves that sort of thing to ladies nowadays. And they don't write to me.'

'Ah!' said Flora.

Dick began to feel quite uncanny: her manner was so odd; absent and dreamy, yet present and awake. United to the heavy stillness and oppression of the day, it seemed to draw away from him all his good spirits, his courage even. She might have been a sea enchantress, who had wiled him to this lonely shore, and perhaps would presently glide gently down into the soft oily water that came lapping to her feet. And her mortal lover could not stay behind, but must follow wherever she chose to lead the way. Some wild old legend of the kind began to hover in Dick's brain as Flora sat and gazed at the water. But presently she turned her blue eyes on him, and he felt happier. Feeling as if only by a strong effort he could break the charm that seemed to be binding him, he suddenly laid his hand on hers and clasped it tight.

'Flora,' he said, 'I have something to say to you, and I want to say it at once.'

'Don't, Dick, please,' said Mrs. Lancaster, shaking off his hand.

'Listen to me,' said Dick imploringly. 'I want to tell you—'

'Let me speak first,' said Flora. 'There is something I want to tell you too, and you shall listen to me. After that you may hold your tongue, if you please, for I don't think you will have anything to say.'

'You have no idea, then, what

it is. Nothing could change—' began Dick eagerly.

'Patience. I am not blind or stupid, or very young. I wish you were not so silly. As you are, you have brought something on yourself. I am going to tell you a story.'

'As long as I may stay here,' said Dick, 'I don't care what you tell me.'

'Do you remember asking me one day if I was happy?'

'Ah, that day!'

'I have good cause to remember it too,' said Flora. 'I might have guessed; but I never thought it would come to this. Do you remember me when I was a girl, Dick?'

'What a question! You are just the same now, only far more charming.'

'I believe I am rather nicer than I was then,' said Flora thoughtfully. 'Yes, certainly I was horrid then. You had a happy escape in those days, but I thought it unkind of you to go away without wishing me good-bye.'

'I was desperately sorry,' said Dick; 'but they bullied me so at home. You liked me a little, then, Flora? It was not all my fancy?'

'Liked you? yes, after a fashion. But I did not really care a bit. I wanted to get away from home. I had been reading a lot of novels, and had a notion of grand names and pedigrees. You were the nearest thing to all that.'

Dick laughed, which did him good.

'You might have found somebody more distinguished than me,' he said.

'Nobody that came in my way. O dear, what an idiot I was! Well, after you were gone and that chance was lost, I grew more and more discontented at home. They did not spoil me then, I

think, quite as much as they do now; still, they were the kindest parents. But, you know, I had picked up all these ideas; and things were always grating on me that a more obtuse girl would not have noticed—little vulgarities and provincialisms. Then, to crown all, I had an offer from a merchant's clerk at Morebay, a good man, and very well off. But I could not endure the thought of him. Perhaps I was foolish to be so fanciful.'

'That I am sure you were not,' said Dick. He was half lying on the rocks, leaning his head on his hand, and looking up into her face, which softened and became prettier than ever as she talked of her young days.

'You may say so when you have heard all,' said Flora, sighing. 'I could not bear this man, as I tell you. And then there was poor George Lancaster: he was very much in love with me, and quite a gentleman; and I married him, as you know. Ah, dear me! I told you one day that I left all the sunshine behind at St. Denys. I won't go back to those years. Ill-health for him and unhappiness for me. Poor fellow! We were not suited to each other, and his relations did all they could to make me more miserable than I was. O, it was hard! A lonely girl, and so far away from home.'

She paused a minute. Dick held his peace, for he had nothing to say, and only wished that Flora would let her poor dead husband alone.

'Well, that was over,' she went on, in a tone of relief. 'I came back home, and here I have been ever since, as you know; but not without adventures.'

'You were not likely to be without them,' said Dick; but it must be confessed that a cold shudder crept over him. What

could Flora mean by that deepening colour, that happy triumphant smile, which seemed to say that all the past was blotted out and swept away in the light of what she had now to tell him?

'I was ill and dismal enough at first,' she said. 'It is only two years, in fact, since I quite recovered. Now, Dick'—her face had become very grave as she turned to him—'I am going to allude to yesterday. It was very, very kind of you to bring me that bracelet. I was sorry for what my father did at the time, though, after all, I believe it was the best thing. It makes it necessary for me to tell you the truth; and your behaviour and Miss Northcote's, which I feel intensely, makes me owe it to you all the more.'

'The truth? What do you mean?' said Dick vaguely.

'Dick, I am going to trust something to your honour—a secret which nobody knows, except the two people it concerns. You will understand why I tell you; it is the only thing that will really satisfy you. I am very grateful; I look upon you as my best friend, and I am sure you won't betray me. Am I right?'

'Of course,' said Dick hoarsely.

'Between two and three years ago I began to see a good deal more of a person I had always known slightly, and we found out that we had always had a fancy for each other. I certainly never met any one else that— Well, I must only tell you the facts,' she said, leaning forward, and shading her face with her hand. 'We were engaged: there were reasons for keeping it secret; but I hope they won't last much longer, for of course I find myself in a painful position sometimes—now, for instance.'

'Do you mean that you are engaged now?' said Dick slowly,

frowning and staring, as if he could not trust his senses.

'Yes.'

There was a long pause. Dick stared vacantly at the rocks, dimly remembering Mrs. Penny's gossip and other things which had frightened him. Flora lifted her head, and gazed out across the water, her face full of past and present happiness. Presently, however, compassion for Dick found its way in; she turned towards him, and saw something so stony, so like despair, that she was startled out of her calmness.

'O Dick, don't look like that!' she said. 'I am very sorry; I shall always like you so much.'

The voice of the siren had a strange effect on Dick. He sprang upright, shook himself, stood looking at her for a moment, and then sat down again beside her on the rocks.

'I was only thinking,' he said. 'Will you tell me why this should be such a secret?'

'It is his wish,' answered Flora, in a low voice. 'His father is a man of good position, and he is not independent of him. He probably would be very angry; he hopes to see his way more clearly soon. Everybody's relations are not so generous as yours.'

'And this has gone on for two or three years,' said Dick. 'Do you think you are properly treated?'

'I am quite satisfied. All I ask you is to keep the secret.'

'That I have promised,' said Dick. 'I want to ask you one question. Answer it or not, as you choose. Is it Randal Hawke?'

'What can have put him into your head?' said Flora, blushing crimson. 'Well, I suppose I must trust you altogether. You are a gentleman, thank goodness! Yes, it is Randal Hawke. I must know what made you think so.'

'I knew he admired you,' said Dick quietly.

Certainly, with all his weaknesses, he was at heart a gentleman; for it never occurred to him as possible to blacken Randal in Flora's eyes. He was heartily sorry for her; his own disappointment was half forgotten in regret that she should throw her affection away on a lying scoundrel, as he very cordially called Randal to himself. His remembrance of the tone in which Randal had talked of Mrs. Lancaster made him more angry still.

'Heaven grant she may find out her mistake before it is too late!' thought Dick.

In the mean while Flora had taken a letter from the packet beside her, and unfolded it.

'You may look at this signature if you like,' said she. 'You seem a little doubtful. This will show you that I have spoken the truth.'

'No, thank you,' said Dick. 'I don't doubt you in the least; why should I? The mist seems to be changing into fog. Don't you think we had better get out of this?'

Flora was quite ready, and they walked up almost in silence. She was conscious of a respect for Dick such as she had never felt before, combined with a little irritation; he seemed to have taken the downfall of his hopes so very calmly.

Captain and Mrs. Cardew were obliged to keep their surprise and disappointment to themselves. Flora simply told them that she had refused Dick Northcote, and did not know why they should have expected anything else; he was not at all the sort of person for her.

Miss Northcote wondered what could have happened; her nephew was so grave and silent all the evening. It was not till very late

that he said to her, 'She won't have me, aunt Kate.'

'Indeed!' said Miss Northcote, trying not to show her intense joy.

'I have been thinking,' said Dick, 'that I should like to get away from here for a few weeks. Didn't you tell me the other day that Harry Northcote wanted me to go and see him in Yorkshire?'

'Yes. He will be delighted. You could not do better.'

'I shall write to him to-morrow,' said Dick, and relapsed into silence.

CHAPTER XII.

A WET DAY AT PENSAND.

AFTER Dick was gone, a week of rainy weather came to St. Denys. The roses were dashed, and the lovely views were shrouded in mist. No one felt the change more than Mabel Ashley, in her prison at Pensand. While those broad sheets of rain were driving up from the sea, while the wind was howling round the old towers, the trees bowing their heads before it, and the flowers crouching and shivering, she had nothing to do but to sit and look out, and feel that as long as she had the garden there had been nothing really to complain of.

There she sat in the drawing-room window, with her hands before her, the saddest object in that sad anomaly, a wintry day in summer. It was really cold, but General Hawke had not suggested a fire, and those stern bright steel grates looked as if they did not know the meaning of the word. Mabel had soon perceived that, though he called her the mistress of his house, she must not presume to give any orders. Probably the General, who had a good blaze in his own study on

every day but the hottest, never thought that any one so young could feel cold and damp in that handsome comfortable drawing-room.

As Mabel sat there she was busy thinking. She wondered whether this kind of thing was to go on for ever; did the General expect her to spend her life with him at Pensand? And why was she so disappointed, so unhappy? Well, he had been very kind to her when she first came, and he was very kind to her still, but somehow he seemed to have finished all his stories and all he had to say to her. He never interfered with her; she could do exactly as she pleased within the walls, but the worst of it was that she had nothing to do. She wished he would interfere with her more, would give her things to do for him. Then she was surprised to find that she half wished herself back at school.

Anthony Strange had been trying to teach her about flowers, to interest her in botany, but she had no turn for it. She liked the flowers themselves, but could not care about their structure; and when she confessed that, Anthony threw his book aside, and said that after all he was glad to hear it: a thing had not been made such a perfect and beautiful whole that we mortals might pull it to pieces for our instruction.

'What becomes of science with such a notion as that?' said the General rather contemptuously; he had lately taken to appearing whenever Anthony paid his visits.

'I have nothing to do with science,' said Anthony. 'It is the enemy of true civilisation.'

This had happened just before the rainy weather had set in, and since then Mr. Strange had not been at the Castle. Mabel won-

dered why, and thought it rather unkind of him; he might know how lonely she was, and he was rather fond of being out on a stormy day.

'Nobody cares for me, and I am left quite alone,' thought Mabel to herself, as she sat there. 'I can't even write a letter to any one. O dear, how unhappy I am! I wish his aunt would come and see me again. I do believe she is kind, though she didn't seem to like me much that day. Or if I might go to Carweston to stay with Mrs. Strange!'

With so few happy things to think about, perhaps it would have been unnatural if Dick's sins had not been forgotten, and if the journey with him had not returned to the girl's mind in all its pleasantness. But Mabel did not often indulge herself in thinking of it. That afternoon she could hardly get rid of it; and her sad little experience of life, the conviction that the nicest things were the most likely to be wrong and disappointing, brought a few tears to her eyes. She leaned forward and hid her face, very much ashamed of them. Poor discontented Mabel! The driving rain and wind prevented her from hearing a footstep on the gravel, and she did not at all know that somebody with a greatcoat and umbrella was standing outside looking on, while she was shaken by two or three sobs, the more violent for being repressed.

After watching her for a minute, the man with the umbrella turned quietly away, and walked off round the house. A few minutes later, a step in the library made Mabel start up and hastily dry her eyes. Then Randal Hawke opened the door and came in. He was looking singularly well and handsome; his eyes were bright, and he came forward and shook

hands with Mabel in a very pleasant and cordial way.

'I bring rain, don't I?' he said, 'but this is more serious than the last. How frightfully wintry it is on the top of your mountain! and no fire! No wonder your hand is like an icicle.'

Randal rang the bell vigorously, and the butler appeared in astonishment.

'This fire must be lighted at once, Stevens.—When I come home they find that there is a master in the house,' he said, laughing, to Mabel. 'I make a point of being *exigeant*; it is good for them. Have you had this sort of thing for a week? How moped you must be!'

'I think it began last Tuesday,' said Mabel.

She had not yet made up her mind whether Randal's society was better than none. Ten minutes later she was inclined to think that it was, when a great fire was blazing up, reflected in the steel, and flashing and dancing all over the room; when Randal had established her and himself in arm-chairs close to it, and had given his final orders to the butler, 'Bring tea at once.'

'Shall I tell the General you are here, sir?' said Stevens.

'No.'

Randal was much pleasanter than he had been on that former occasion. The bad weather seemed to have no depressing effect on him, and Mabel could not help being pleased at the attentive kindness with which he treated her. Her spirits rose as the fire blazed up. After gazing at it contentedly for a minute or two, she looked at him and smiled, and Randal saw that the odd little face could light up very brightly and sweetly.

'It really was cold,' she said.

'Of course it was. One might

as well be in the Arctic regions. No, don't disturb yourself. I'll give you your tea.'

Mabel watched him at the tea-tray, and thought with some amusement that those small hands of his were just fitted for their work.

'Are you getting warmer? Or shall I fetch a railway-rug and wrap you in it?' asked Randal presently.

Mabel laughed quite merrily.

'O no, thank you. I am quite warm already.'

'To tell you the truth,' said Randal, arranging himself comfortably in his armchair, 'I came down to see how you were getting on. Do you ever have presentiments?'

'No,' said Mabel.

'They are useful things sometimes. I had one two days ago. It said that Pensand was very dismal, especially in wet weather, and that its inmates were likely to die of cold and dulness. That unless I made haste to look after them, something serious would certainly happen. So I made my arrangements, and came. But certainly I did not expect to find you without a fire. Why didn't you order one?'

'I—did not know that I might,' said Mabel.

'Please to understand that while you are in this house the servants obey you. You must forgive my father. Old people are thoughtless and selfish; they can't help it.'

'If the General had thought of my being cold, I am sure he would—' began Mabel rather indignantly.

'Just as I said. He did not think. Neither does he think of your not being cheerful. Now, Miss Ashley, tell me—do you still think Pensand such a charming place; find yourself quite happy; want nothing beyond it?'

Mabel was silent.

'Do you never find yourself bored, especially in wet weather? Now you are truthful, I'm sure, and you really can't deny it,' said Randal, bending forward and smiling.

'It is my own fault,' said Mabel. 'I am not clever, and I have so few occupations.'

'Poverina!' said Randal under his breath. 'Well, I can't stand that, you know. I feel responsible for my father's doings, and I can't let him bore you to death. I hope you won't be angry with me, but I brought you down a few books; novels, and so on. You must have read everything in the house by this time.'

'Thank you. It was very kind indeed of you to think of it,' said Mabel, flushing with pleasure.

After a minute Randal began again.

'You must not think that my father means to neglect you. He is immensely fond of you. It would vex him beyond everything if he thought you were unhappy. And if I ask you to bear with him a little, you must remember it is not for very long. As soon as you are twenty-one you can say good-bye to Pensand.'

'I never quite realised that before,' said Mabel, opening her eyes very wide.

'They certainly are remarkable. Only almost too big,' thought her companion.

'Yes, of course you can,' he said. 'The whole world will be before you.'

'But I have nobody to live with, nowhere to go,' sighed Mabel to herself. 'O, don't think I am unhappy here. The General is always kind. Only it is a little lonely sometimes, and I am very silly.'

'I could tell you something,

but you would never forgive me,' said Randal.

'What is it?'

'You will promise not to like me any less? No, don't say that would be impossible.'

'I was not going to say anything of the kind,' said Mabel, brightening up and laughing.

'Thank you. Then let me confess. I came up to the window just now, when you were sitting there. To say that I was shocked, Miss Ashley, is a very mild word. I very nearly went straight to my father and collared him. But I thought I would try first what I could do to mend matters. I think I shall tell him, as a warning—'

'O, please, pray don't!' exclaimed Mabel, full of shame and distress. 'I am so sorry. It was very naughty and silly of me, just like a child. Please, you must not tell him.'

'I would not do anything to vex you,' said Randal gravely. 'Only don't let it happen again. I know what it must be for you without any companion. I was afraid of it. My father, you see, will make a hermit of himself. I wonder, is there any one you would like to ask to stay with you? I might make him agree to that, perhaps.'

Mabel thought over her only acquaintance, her schoolfellows.

One by one she fancied them laughing at her, quarrelling with her, gushing, talking nonsense, mimicking Miss Wrench behind her back. No; solitude was better than such society as theirs. She looked up at Randal and shook her head.

'No,' she said, 'thank you. I have no friends. I would rather be alone.'

Randal stared, and stroked his moustache.

'Then I don't know what we can do,' he said. 'You can suggest nothing?'

'O, not in this weather, of course; but if I might ever go out a little, I should like to see St. Denys and Carweston and the country.'

'And Morebay and the sea,' said Randal. 'Yes, we must try what we can do. This time I can only spare one clear day; but in a week or two I shall be down again, and we will have some drives. I shall be too happy to show you the country.'

Mabel found that evening very pleasant. The General was delighted to have his son at home; he was very proud of him, Mabel thought. Everything in the house seemed to brighten up; the servants did their work more briskly, the General told his most amusing stories, and Randal's comments were more amusing still. He was very quiet, though so full of life. He scarcely ever laughed, and all his movements were deliberate and graceful; he spoke slowly, moved his eyes slowly, but said everything he meant to say, and saw all that there was to be seen. He was very agreeable, and showed none of the cynicism that had shocked Mabel on her first acquaintance with him. A much more worldly woman might have been flattered by his marked attention to herself. Still, she did not feel quite happy or quite comfortable, and, though she listened and was amused, felt as if she had nothing to say. She could not chatter naturally to Randal and his father as she could to Anthony. She was aware of the difference, though she did not understand it; for certainly Randal seemed quite as much interested in her happiness as Anthony.

AMONGST SOME CURIOS.

A Smoking-Room Mixture.

OURS is, perhaps, as original a smoking-room as can be found in the United Kingdom. Each one of us, the male members of the family, has travelled, and contributed something towards the formation, within the four rather limited walls, of a regular museum, so that what with pictures and scrolls, trophies of arms and pipes, cases of strange birds and animals, ledges of china and porcelain, niches filled with quaint odds and ends, and bookshelves, there is scarcely a square inch left for the next contribution. Some of these curios have stories attached to them, without which they would appear absolutely valueless in the eyes of nine out of every ten visitors. Were they symphonies in green or gray, or bits of Queen Anne domestic decoration, they might be appreciated ; but as they are mere odd bits, seemingly without grace or harmony, their worth, except by us, is unrecognised.

On a big nail—the driving in of which nearly jeopardised the house, inasmuch as it pierced a gas-pipe—hangs an American fire-helmet ; a stout leather hat, with a peak, a huge flap behind, and a polished plate in front, on which in white letters appears the word ‘Independence.’ It has seen excellent service, as the indentations and scratches show, and it saved the life of its wearer ; hence its value to us as a curio.

One of us, Jack, a regular rolling-stone, was long a resident in San Francisco, and ‘for the fun

of the thing’ joined the ‘Independence Fire Company’ of that city. Then he was a wild devil-may-care sort of a fellow, and, except when laid up from the effects of his own foolhardiness, never missed a fire. Well, there was a big fire in Montgomery-street. Jack’s engine was one of the first up, and was working away in the very midst of the excitement and danger. It was a nasty fire, says Jack, because it broke out in a kerosine store placed in the very centre of a huge block of very lofty buildings, and the Independence engine was working in a small space hemmed in on all sides by big ugly walls. Still they had the place of honour, and they meant to stick to it ; besides, Jack as an Englishman and in charge of the engine would not show the white feather with all the other engines around. They got the fire fairly under at about two in the morning, and were ‘reeling up’ previous to quitting the scene of action, when the engineer in charge shouted out, ‘Look out, chaps ! There’s a wall a-coming !’ and bolted. ‘So I tried to do,’ said Jack ; ‘but the wall was too quick for us. Some of our fellows had taken their helmets off, for they’re infernally heavy and hot, you know ; but we all ran. I don’t remember much more ; but when I came to, I found my helmet jammed down over my mouth, and felt as if I’d been hit all over. I looked around, and saw our dainty engine, with its polished work and its painted

body, all smashed under a ton or so of stone and brick, and from under the mass men were dragging bodies, which they covered with white cloths and carried off on stretchers. I then knew that I'd escaped something bad; for I found out that the men who had taken off their helmets had been done for by the falling wall, whilst the engineer, two others, and myself, who had kept ours on, were almost untouched.' Jack brought the helmet home, and it hangs—battered and indented—in the place of honour it deserves.

Above it on the wall hangs a huge rusty key. Not at all an ordinary key, far too big, clumsy, and unsophisticated in its ins and outs for the workmanship of to-day—evidently a key dating from the good old days, when sheer strength and hugeness were considered sufficient safeguards against attack. It is the key of the Royal Opera House at Lisbon, and this is how it came into our possession.

One of us, about ten years back, was a midshipman upon one of her Majesty's vessels, anchored off Lisbon after a pleasant picnicking cruise in the Mediterranean. Half a dozen of his rank, 'sucking Nelsons' as weather-beaten lieutenants termed them, got leave for a day on shore. Midshipman-like, they made the most of their excursion. They smoked Lisbon cabbage, bought at fabulous prices as undoubted Antonio Caruncho; they drank red Val de Peñas like water; they leered under the mantillas of decorous maidens going to Mass; they rode full tilt along the most crowded streets on mule back; in fact, they did all that they should not have done, and left undone all that they should have done, until at last, wearied by successive Lisbon cabbages, frequent potations of Val de Peñas, and constant rows with officials

and duennas, they sought rest on the steps of the Royal Opera House. The singers were rehearsing the evening's opera within, and it was soothing to the midshipman ears; they listened entranced. 'Let's go in and see what the beggars are up to,' suggested an active-minded one. In they went, clattering, laughing, and pushing one another, animated with any feeling but reverence for the place and the situation. The performers stopped short, it was too much; they might be damned by the Lisbon mob in the evening, but to be interrupted in rehearsal by a parcel of English boys was going too far. So the actors, descending in a body from the stage, by sheer weight and numbers, pushed the intruders back on to the steps. The half dozen young monkeys, shut out ignominiously, stood where they were pushed, and looked about for means of revenge. 'Let's lock them in,' suggested the ardent spirit above mentioned. There was the big key—it turned easily. The actors were shut in; and the midshipmen, fully satisfied that their country was no longer affronted with impunity, quietly returned to her Majesty's ship. He who locked the door and who pocketed the key brought it home, and it has hung ever since in our smoking-room.

On the mantelpiece, amidst a crowd of odd nicknacks, is a wooden sword of Japanese manufacture. Japanese swords of all shapes and sizes are, during the present mania for Oriental curios, common enough; but this one is peculiar.

It is the sword which 'assisted' at the committal of *hara kiri*—vulgarly called 'happy despatch'—of one of the most notorious foreigner-haters that ever made the early settlement of Europeans in Japan dangerous. As there is

very much ignorance about the real nature of this *hara kiri*, it may be as well to say that its performance does not necessarily imply suicide. In the olden days, when the strictest codes of chivalry and military honour ruled the land, or at least the upper classes, a nobleman or warrior deeming it necessary to commit *hara kiri* generally called in an 'assistant,' in the person of some very near relation or very intimate friend. Thus this little wooden sword is described as having only 'assisted' at the ceremony of *hara kiri*, inasmuch as it has never tasted human blood, the actual killing being performed by the friend or relation with another sword. And so in the case of the blackguard above referred to—Desyayemon. He coolly waited for a party of English tourists, who he knew would pass a certain temple at a certain hour, and killed two of them. There was of course a cry for vengeance from one end of the European settlement to the other. Desyayemon was given up, and condemned to be publicly executed; but as this disgrace would have entailed ruin on his large family, his prayer that he might be allowed to commit *seppuku* was allowed. The one of us who—perhaps from a morbid curiosity—obtained entrance to the place where the tragedy was to be enacted, thus briefly describes it: 'We were shown into the garden of a temple overlooking the European settlement of Yokohama—a dozen of us altogether, as representing the foreign community. Under a group of trees, opposite to where we were requested to seat ourselves, the turf had been raised into a sort of platform some twelve feet square, and covered with fresh white matting. On the matting was a small lacquered

tray, such as one sees now in five out of every six London drawing-rooms, and in this tray lay a small knife wrapped in paper. The garden was hung round with white cloth, so that no low caste or menial eye might be witness of the tragedy. Every one present preserved the strictest silence, and the cold stateliness of every one and everything gave us a sort of inkling of what was to come, and made one or two of us wish we had stayed away. As the temple bell boomed five o'clock Desyayemon entered the enclosure, followed by his "assistant," girded with the usual two swords of the soldier. He placed himself opposite the lacquer tray, squatting on his heels, *more Japonico*, his harsh cruel features wearing an expression of the utmost indifference to everything around. An official in full costume then stepped forward, and read from a scroll a statement that the prisoner Desyayemon had been guilty of an unwarranted and brutal attack upon harmless foreigners, and that he was now prepared to pay the penalty of his crime. When the official had finished, Desyayemon bowed his head and murmured a few words, the tenor of which we did not catch. Then ensued a dead silence. The prisoner, still squatting, slowly proceeded to strip off his upper clothing; meanwhile the "assistant" crept behind him, with his long gleaming sword held ready to strike. The disrobing accomplished, Desyayemon shouted, "So be it to all Western barbarians who dare to soil our fair land by their presence!" Stooping forward, he made a move as if to grasp the sword on the tray before him. The "assistant" seized the opportunity, and with one swift blow of his blade severed the head of the murderer from his body. Sickened with the

sight, we prepared to go, when the official who had read out the sentence motioned to me that I might take the small sword as a token that justice had been done.' Thus it came into our possession, and has since remained amongst our other curios.

On the frame of a quaint piece of old Ningpo wood-carving rests a small, dirty, rusty metal flower. Nine people out of ten would take it up and put it down without remark, yet it is a relic. It was once gilded, and formed one of a cluster which decorated a mirror in the drawing-room of one of the sweetest bijou residences in St. Cloud,—that is, the St. Cloud of olden days. The house, a good specimen of the old French *maison de campagne*, belonged to a famous Parisian *dilettante*, whose sole occupation was to crowd it with the choicest porcelain, the most beautiful specimens of antique and modern art, rare pictures, old furniture, and many thousands of quaint Old-World volumes. Save when he had a reunion of artists and men of letters, the old man, a personal friend of our family, lived in retirement. His family had grown up and were scattered about the world, his wealth was great, so that he could afford to spend his time in procuring treasures for his house at St. Cloud. So he lived for many years; then the great storm which shook the world burst in 1870, the Teuton came, sweeping through the fair land, and the owners of country *châteaux* fled to the capital. But our old man, so passionately fond was he of his house, of its varied contents, of the great sloping lawn, the grand old trees, the raised promenade studded with huge vases which commanded the celebrated 'Point de Vue de St. Cloud,' that, though he knew the circle of Prussian steel to be

closing in around, would not budge an inch. Bustling, glittering, gay little St. Cloud was as still as the grave the day before the French batteries opened fire. Not until the very shells were bursting in his garden, and the *débris* of fallen houses had choked the road outside his gate, did they force the old man to fly across the river. As he turned the angle of the street he saw a shell enter at the roof of his beloved house, and rip the wall open to the ground. Yet it was not destroyed. The Prussians made it a *corps de garde*, and drank the old man's choice champagne out of thin-necked Bohemian beakers and bowls carved by Benvenuto Cellini. But alas for the treasures of the house! Shattered into atoms lay priceless porcelain, glass, statues, mouldings, carvings, and pictures, which had charmed the eyes of half the *savants* of Europe. Not that the German occupants lacked appreciation of the value and beauty of art; for all that had not been broken by the shells they seized as lawful booty. Finally the house itself was wrecked by the French batteries on the heights of Sèvres, placed there to dislodge the Germans from St. Cloud. Several shells burst at once inside, and nothing but the four walls were left standing. I visited the place not very long after the last bombardment, when the ruins of the beautiful village were yet smouldering around the untouched church, and when the only signs of animal life were a few houseless wretches crouched under extemporised shelters of stones and planks, and some disconsolate cats and dogs. I had literally to climb into what remained of the house over heaps of ruins and rubbish: a piece of parquet flooring, strangely perfect, showed me

whereabouts I stood, and the only object I could find to carry away as a memento was the little metal flower. A year or two after, I visited the place, found the house entirely rebuilt, and its old possessor, strangely altered by time and trouble, as busy as in the old time amongst his new collection of treasures. He told me that he should never equal the one destroyed, but still hoped to gather together a few valuable nicknacks. This, however, he did not live to do.

Spread out against the opposite wall is an old-fashioned fan ; very big, very heavy, and curiously painted with scenes of love and courtship. It belonged to an ancestress of ours, who was a lady-in-waiting to Queen Charlotte, and daughter of the Ranger of Exmoor. Lady Dolly—that was her name—appears to have been something more than a hoyden, if the tale told of her in connection with the fan be true. None of us believe it, but we invariably tell it when the fan is noticed.

She was very pretty (her portrait may still be seen in the *Book of England's Beauty*, published about 1770), and possessed the most unbounded animal spirits, fostered no doubt by the fine open air she breathed, and the freedom and ease which characterised the courts of the old Devonian squires. At seventeen years of age she was reputed the prettiest girl in a county famed for pretty girls ; yet, so far from having her head turned by knowledge of her own beauty and flattery, she had been known, on the eve of a grand entertainment, to throw off her festal robes and jewels, disappear, and be discovered dancing and jesting with the village lasses. No one could control her, but no one could be angry with her. 'Lady Dolly' was a synonym

in the rude cottages for miles round for all that was gracious, kindly, and pleasing ; and although the young squires were a little afraid of her (she was as handy with her fists as with her tongue, and had wound up more than one sharp retort with a box on the ears), there was not one but was head over heels in love with her, or who would not have given his life for her. In fact she was the idol of the county, and it was a sad day when, to gratify her mother's ambition, she was carried off to do lady-in-waiting's duties in London.

Amongst her many admirers was a young Devonshire squire named Blake. He was a fine dashing young fellow, of good family and good means, but the friends and advisers of Lady Dolly looked upon him as an impudent adventurer for daring to aspire so high. But she really loved him, and nobody had yet thwarted her will successfully. When she was in town with the court they corresponded ; when she returned to Devonshire for a short respite from her duties, they met and walked together.

One night she was missing from the paternal hall. Mr. Blake was missing from Bideford also. There was no doubt about it ; they had eloped.

Every measure was taken to stop the fugitives ; no post-chaise could leave the county without being examined, and Blake's rivals were foremost in the hunt. Some of the pursuers arrived at a remote inn on the borders of Cornwall late one wild winter night. Beds were not to be had, for a lady and gentleman had just bespoken every room. Outside a door was a valise with the name 'Francis Blake, Bideford,' upon it ; this betrayed the fugitive lovers. The seekers hammered at the door. Young Blake opened it in person.

One of the young squires, intoxicated with the success of having traced the runaway couple, called him a coward. The proud Devon blood rushed to his face, and he dealt the youth a blow with his fist which sent him reeling downstairs; but he paid dearly for his temerity. Ere he could recover himself, he was thrown to the ground by the other assailants, and in falling his own sword pierced him to the heart. Aroused by the clamour, Lady Dolly rushed out, and seeing Blake lying on the ground bathed in blood, hurled the fan she held in her hand at the heads of the stupefied squires, disappeared, and was never seen again.

So runs the tale of the fan. That it belonged to Lady Dolly there is no doubt; but that it was acquired under the tragical circumstances above related, may be open to question.

The last curio to be noticed in this paper has also a tragical history attached to it. It is a battered, weather-worn, old alpenstock; not one of your 'personally conducted' belongings, white, smooth, and with the name of every mountain in Switzerland burnt into it; but a stout iron-shod staff, made in England, and made, as are most English articles, for use, and not for show and swagger.

It belonged to an old Haileybury chum of mine, and to me is the most valuable curio in the room. We were out for our hard-earned holiday some ten years back, and had wandered about Switzerland during a happy three weeks in the month of May, before the tourist tide began to set in, walking, climbing, and sketching in the fullest enjoyment of perfect health and absolute freedom from care. To wind up, we determined to have a peep at Italy. So from Ragaz we got to Coire,

and from Coire to Tisis, at the entrance of the pass well known as the Via Mala. The water, or the goat's-milk, or too much exertion had not agreed with me; so I arranged to go by diligence to Chiavenna, whilst he walked.

'Good-bye, old fellow,' said he; 'it's a splendid walk, and I wish you could come; anyhow, we shall meet at Chiavenna.' And he swung round the corner with the long slinging step which had tired me out many a time.

I had a half mind to follow him; but the contingency of being suddenly taken ill in a desolate mountain region was too serious to be risked, so I returned to the hotel. Chiavenna was very soon seen; and Conradi's hotel not being cheerful, I retired to bed at an early hour, feeling so much better, that I determined on the morrow to ascend the Splügen road for some distance and meet my friend H. He should have arrived at Chiavenna the evening of the day after I had got there; but not only were no signs of him visible to me, but the Coire diligence people said that it was fully three weeks since they had passed any pedestrian on the road other than the peasants of the country. I became uneasy, and finally desperate, when, after two days, there was still no sign of H., so I determined to organise a regular search. I gathered the guides of the place together, told them my object, and promised large reward for success. I was too ill again to go myself, so I waited at the hotel. In the evening they returned, saying that they had searched every cleft and gully on each side of the road, but without coming across a sign of the traveller. I had yet one ray of hope. Perhaps he had taken the wrong turning at the village of Splügen, and had wandered on to

Ballinzona. But in that case—in itself very improbable—he would certainly have reached Chiavenna long since. Still a messenger was sent to Bellinzona to inquire at the inns; he returned with the same reply. I grew heart-sick, and knowing that my worst anticipations had been realised, packed up and prepared to return homewards. Passengers were few at so early a period of the year; so that liberal ‘backsheesh’ induced the driver of the diligence to promise that he would go slowly along until the head of the pass was reached to give a last chance.

We were just at the head of the pass when we met a peasant with an alpenstock over his shoulder. I knew the stick at a glance. The diligence was stopped, and the man, terribly frightened, said that he had picked it up in a cleft just off the road. Of course I descended, left the diligence to pursue its journey, and searched with the peasant. All that day we searched, and I slept in his rude hut for the night. Not a trace could we find; and the alpenstock was all I ever obtained to keep in remembrance of my poor friend’s death.

PAS DES PATINEURS.

I.

HARK, on the ice how our skates are ringing !
Down the river we quickly fly,
Swift as the swallows their circles winging,
Swifter than clouds in wind-swept sky.

II.

Red shines the sun through his misty curtain,
Cold blows the wind, but naught care we ;
For on our feet are the ‘shoes of swiftness,’
And in our hearts young blood beats free.

III.

So, hey for the frost with its crystal mirror,
Binding the river’s rolling tide !
Long last the ice, and long may we gaily,
Skating together, joyful, glide.

A. O.

THE INCONVENIENCES OF A LIMITED INCOME.

I THINK it must be obvious, on reflection, to every intelligent being, that there is a considerable amount of inconvenience attendant on a limited income. In case he disputes this axiomatic truth, I am prepared to argue the point with him. Of course it is satisfactory to possess an income, although it may be burdened by an income-tax. 'An empty purse is a great curse,' as the Scotch proverb feelingly remarks. All those who deal in the most rudimentary principles of political economy deplore the wretched combination of fixed incomes and rising prices. The fixed income, as implied by the phrase, has its limitations, which are frequently of a coarse and repulsive kind. For myself, as a philosopher, my natural wants are few and very simple. Give me my little dinner, my cellar, and my library, abundant society and locomotion, and I really do not care if I have only fourpence-halfpenny to rattle in my pocket. The system of human society has, however, yet to be constructed upon this simplified basis. The practical outcome is that on every side I am beset with considerable inconveniences arising from a limited income. Inconveniences are in some degree worse than misfortunes. They are the gnats, midges, and mosquitoes of life. They are the tiny Lilliputians that chain us to the ground as securely as the most gigantic Brobdingnagian could do so. You may be smothered beneath an accumulation of sand-grains as surely as you may be smashed by granite. And of all

inconveniences, there are none that are more vexatious in their way than those belonging to a limited income.

I might of course speak of the more obvious and glaring inconveniences belonging to this ill-conditioned state of things. There has happened to some of us that unpleasant quarter of an hour which you spend in the study of paterfamilias, to whom you have been referred by the young lady, and who desires to have a full explanation of your condition and prospects in life. He declines to say, 'Youth is no objection; here are twenty thousand pounds. Be happy!' He inquires whether you are able to maintain his daughter in the comfort and luxuries to which she has been accustomed. These comforts include, among similar modest items, a box at the Opera and a horse and groom for Rotten Row. You mention your limited income, and have to confess to the contemptible slightness of its dimensions. You at once encounter the cynical smile and the deprecating gesture; you are told, with hands of wild rejection, 'Go!' Similarly you cannot give the premium for the business which you would prefer; you cannot effect the military exchange which you want; you cannot go to the particular college you would like; you cannot take up the shares you would like; you cannot take a part in the particular syndicate you would like,—because your income is a limited income, with all its attendant inconveniences. You think of those mar-

vellous scenes by those great masters of fiction, Disraeli and Dumas. You are not like the wonderful count who has unlimited credit on the three best bankers in Paris; and there is no Sidonia who will give you enough gold to compose the lions on Solomon's steps. Your destiny is inexorably fixed with all the rigidity of economical law. Indeed, some very sensible people have gone so far as to argue that a limited income is all a mistake, and, contrary at least to the opening thesis of this paper, think that it is better to be without it than be with it. They are certainly able to produce wise saws and modern instances very well deserving of attention in support of their opinions.

For instance, some young men, finding that they have the wherewithal to satisfy the needs of the day, appear to debar themselves from all the avenues to distinction in life. They are destitute of that necessity which is the primary stimulus of all effort; they have no need to 'break their birth's invidious bar;' they do not press into the foremost ranks of some calling and profession. These are the men who never marry, who systematically decry marriage, and who pass a selfish unlovely life on a small or snug independence. The best thing that often happens to such men is that they lose their 'little all' in some of those speculations which profess limited liability, and often involve unlimited ruination. Then they are in deep waters; they must strike out, sink or swim. Of course some of them sink; but some of them, even without bladders, come safe to some sort of haven. Then I have known men who have been so disgusted with the inconveniences of a limited income that they have resolved to exchange it for a short and merry expenditure.

They say that the interest is so very small that it is of no earthly use to them, and therefore they resolve to spend their principal. They capitalise their income, and then dispose merrily of their lump-sum. This is very much the way with our American cousins; they make a fortune at home, consume it abroad, and then go home to make another. Unfortunately this cannot be relied on as a general rule. We often hear of people who are said to run through two or three fortunes; but there are many people who have no chance of careering through a single one. Many a spendthrift lives to regret the limited income which he has despised.

But I speak feelingly. I assert in the most undisguised way that there are undoubted inconveniences attending the possession of a limited income. They meet and baffle one at every turn. I am making a long journey, and should like to travel by a Pullman car. I am obliged to go second class, with lady's-maids and livery-servants, or even by a wretched third. I get to Switzerland for a holiday, and I long to go on to Florence, to Cyprus, to the Nile. But I have only ten days and a couple of ten-pound notes, and my movements are checked by the limitations of impecuniosity. No statute of limitation is more severe in its restrictions than these. I should like to take a hansom, and I 'bus it, or proceed on that renowned steed, Shanks' mare. My pretty cousin Fanny gets married, and all the tables in the drawing-room are covered with her presents. I had rather a weakness for Fanny myself once, and should have liked to have given her a gorgeous present that would have outshone them all. But my little offering, which has cost me what would

keep me in cigars for months, is left in the shade. When I was last abroad I should have liked to have had a boatman for the lake, and a guide for the mountain. At the risk of shivering my boat or my neck against a rock, I had to rely on my own unaided and undisciplined exertions. Then, as for church collections, I sympathise deeply with the interesting causes so eloquently pleaded for; but my limited means have induced me to lay up a small stock of threepenny-bits and the slight residue of foreign coins which I was unable to dispose of abroad. I should like to take in the lordly *Times*, but I am reduced to a 'penny daily.' I should like to drink champagne, but I profess to prefer bitter beer. I should like to help my brother-in-law Jones, who is terribly out-at-elbows, but I must content myself with good wishes. I should like Belgravia, but I am consigned to Bloomsbury. I should like to buy new books and periodicals, but must be content to get more than full value for my solitary guinea at Mudie's. I should like to tip servants and railway porters, but they would look on my small fee with contempt. I should like to scatter my small change, but I recollect the remoteness of quarter-day. One's freedom of action is terribly impeded. I am in the midst of a vexatious system of checks, balances, and counteractions. They are the stinging inconveniences of a limited income.

I have a friend whom I will call Mentor. He must have been lineally descended from the companion of Telemachus, and his more immediate ancestor must have been that good little boy of *Evenings at Home* grown up to man's estate, the little philosopher of Salisbury Plain. He at least

has no sympathy with the pessimism of Hartmann or Schopenhauer. He is pleased to remonstrate with me on the line of argument which I have been adopting. He strongly inclines to the belief that whatever is, is right. He quotes the lines from the *Essay on Man*:

'In spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear, whatever is, is right.'

But I have ventured to suggest another reading, over which future editors and commentators may fight as much as they like:

'In spite of pride, spite erring poet's song,
One truth is clear, *whatever is, is wrong*.'

'But,' argues my mild-eyed mild-voiced Mentor, 'don't you see that you have been making a long series of blunders in these long series of complaints? It is far better for you to walk than to ride. You want Banting, and the walk will do you good. It is far better for you to eat a moderate dinner than a sumptuous dinner; it will save you from dyspepsia and gout. You are not like a great earl I know of, who has always an elaborate banquet on his table, and dines off an apple and a biscuit. You are really just as well off in a third-class carriage as in a Pullman car; the difference is mainly in the idea. Never you mind for cousin Fanny and the magnificent present; she is another man's property now, and you have no further concern in her affairs. If you exchange a book most days at Mudie's, you will do as much reading as if you belonged to the London Library or the British Museum. True it is very nice and amiable of you to want to help other people, but then it may be quite as well that you should let them help themselves. In point of fact, you see that it is far better, develops vigour and independence, that you should climb and row for your-

self, even at a little wholesome risk, than going on the bladder system in swimming. Of course I feel for your losing the *Times*, if any one can be really said to lose it in the haunts of civilisation ; but if you did not take in the penny papers,' added Mentor, with an air of insuperable modesty, 'you would lose the inestimable advantage of perusing some of my own lucubrations.'

Of course it was impossible to controvert the last item of this great moral account. The optimist theory is certainly very encouraging. For the moment a pleasant *couleur de rose* seemed to spread itself over the facts of individual and social life. But the hard inexorable logic of our existence still brings us back to the unhappy conviction that a limited income has its inconveniences. This is a conviction which painfully impresses the mind towards quarter-day, when the non-elastic ends refuse to meet, and you have practically mortgaged your income for the most part. There was once a necessitous clergyman who was reproached for his want of faith. 'Faith!' he exclaimed; 'I have lots of faith. It's that wretched butcher and baker who have not got enough faith.' Our impecuniosity is felt only one degree less severely by others than by ourselves. If, for instance, a tradesman's autograph is wanting to his account, and the rent has to wait beyond the rent-day, all the philosophy in the world will not prevent unpleasant thoughts which may be prophetic of unpleasant words, possibly unpleasant legal proceedings. It is not so much the loss of the money as the loss of what money brings. Money means so much. It means education, travel, scenery, society, good food and wine when these are the best of medi-

cines, change of climate when this is the only cure. I suppose the original design was that every one who had great superfluities should administer to those who are greatly necessitous. But this arrangement only works to a limited extent; at present 'there's something in the world amiss.' It is one great inconvenience of a limited income that one has to do without luxuries which circumstances make necessities. It is also a great inconvenience to be wanting in the power to help when you have the desire. But the desire may not be worth much. I knew a man who had limited means, and he was always longing that he might have means which should be practically unlimited. He would be a sort of walking Providence, relieving poverty, succouring the distressed, encouraging merit. He became a rich man, and a most awful screw, and never gave even where he was accustomed to give, where he had given before; the claims on his income and new position 'putting it out of his power.'

It often happens to the man of limited, as compared with him of unlimited, income, as to a man of small, compared to one of large, estate. In a large estate much of the ground is unproductive, much is cultivated below its capabilities, and only a certain proportion is retained for purposes of adornment and delight. Perhaps the man who has only a moderate demesne has quite as much to show as his large-acred neighbour. So it is that the limited income practically gives its owner as much as the very large income. In books, music, society, he has as much enjoyment as the richest. In fact no man, however rich, can absolutely enjoy more than a few thousands a year. All the rest goes to the army of servitors

and retainers. And when the income arrives at a certain amount many a rich man has to work like a horse to save himself from being cheated, and to keep a proper supervision over his affairs. He goes into his study, often the poorest little back room in his stately mansion, and works away like a clerk from ten to four. I have known a man with forty thousand a year work much harder than a clerk, and kill himself with hard work. But still, with a large income anything can be done. But with the limited income, and this is the crowning inconvenience, you are hedged in by a thousand limitations—'cabin-ed, cribbed, confined.' Lord Beaconsfield says that it is a very happy thing to possess ten thousand a year, and be only credited with five. It is a correspondingly

unhappy thing to be credited with double the amount you actually possess; to be mixed up in the race of gentility; to be always at Agony Point; to appear mean when you are really liberal; to be an earthen vessel among the brazen vessels; to be merely lacquered and not genuine coin. These are the inconveniences of a limited income; it requires immense courage and tact to control them, and not all of us do it very successfully. 'Give me neither poverty nor riches,' said the Wise Man; but I think most people mentally add, 'especially not poverty.' Some of the greatest writers of Port Royal have eloquently discussed the 'Praises of Poverty.' I have no wish to contradict them; but at the same time I must fall back upon my original proposition, that there are decided inconveniences attending a limited income.

FORTUNES MADE IN BUSINESS.

V.

COPESTAKE, HUGHES, CRAMPTON, & Co.

THE firm above mentioned ranks, we believe, as one of the largest of the City of London, and presents several points of interest, with some of which the general public have already a certain amount of acquaintance. There is no great industrial hero whose fortunes are linked with the firm, no scientific discovery or invention, and its development; no great colony of operatives that has accrued around it and grown into hamlet or borough. None the less the record of such firms has a place in our social history, and will be suggestive to the future historian of the nineteenth century of the rapid noiseless changes which have taken place in the framework and habits of society. In a recent work, Dr. Smiles has told the life of one of the former partners of the firm, a great philanthropist, who, to quote the language on Howard's monument in St. Paul's Cathedral, 'trod an open but unfrequented path to immortality.' Of him and of his good deeds we shall presently say a few words. It was the famous saying of Napoleon's that we are a nation of shopkeepers, and this special firm is connected with the shopping interests to an immense extent. We English people need not be afraid to accept the bad Corsican's reproach. Let such writers as M. Lanfrey expose the 'Napoleonic legend.' He was a man, to use Baron Stein's expression, 'with hell in his heart and chaos

in his head.' His sneer, like Barrère's, is seen to be the best thing which he could give us. Business flowing through a hundred different channels, bringing employment and conferring comfort and well-being, is the great means of consolidating society, just as war unravels what has been gathered up, and destroys what has been built.

The true industrial hero of the firm, if indeed there be one, is not Mr. Moore, but the deceased senior partner of the firm, Mr. Copestake. Partners may come and partners may go, but this name always remains at the head of the firm. This gentleman could only have achieved his position by a rare combination of intellectual and moral gifts. The story of the firm is that of buying and selling, of microscopic profits amounting to immense results. The firm seems to have had a very lowly beginning, and thence to have advanced with sure rapid gradations to a great commercial position. It is this material growth which arrests the imagination of outsiders, and constitutes a kind of poetry in business. If we ask how such businesses are achieved it is simply by the *τὸ καπηλεύειν* of the Greeks. It is by the buying and the selling—the buying judiciously, the selling safely. The great means by which such firms succeed is by the system of commercial travellers. George Moore has been called the

Napoleon of his class. Like Carré he organised victory. But of course the strongest commercial traveller must have a reserve of strength. The traveller must be subordinate to his principal. There was an energy and concentration of purpose about the principal partner, an almost fierce industry which is impressive enough. He executed the orders which George Moore obtained, and in this way all these businesses are carried on.

Publicity, as the saying goes, is the soul of business; and this publicity can only be obtained in one or two ways, by advertising or by commercial travelling. The commercial traveller insures the publicity, and achieves a number of essential things besides. The order of commercial travellers has had considerable attraction for many minds. How Dickens and Trollope have delighted in the portraiture of the commercial traveller! Wherever you are journeying, the commercial traveller is sure to turn up. We like him most in the old and most picturesque form, as the driver of a gig. He is a man who is thoroughly familiar with our most secluded scenery and most primitive types of character. There is no man in his way who sees more of scenery and society. He knows nature and human nature. The faculties which go to the formation of a first-rate 'commercial' are those which often make the reputation of the barrister or the actor. He has to persuade the trader to give orders even when his shelves are groaning beneath unproductive stock, and at the same time be quite sure the said shopkeeper is not trading beyond his capital. Every man who goes about must see something of the commercial traveller. He is not bad company in a railway-carriage, and he is

often excellent company in an inn. There is an affectation just now in fine gentlemen calling themselves working men. I see that the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Speaker of the House of Commons have been calling themselves working men. No doubt all of us work, but only a proportion of us belong to the *classe ouvrière*. People would act more wisely and attain practical ends if they called themselves commercial travellers instead of calling themselves working men. It would be an exchange for the good if, instead of the newly-lighted smoking fire and horsehair chairs of the coffee-room of a provincial inn, they could attain to the light, warmth, and snugness of the commercial room. The term is indeed used with a certain elasticity. I know one or two of her Majesty's Inspectors who make a point of asserting themselves to be commercial travellers. A barrister on circuit would be entitled to the name, though he would probably desire to waive the privilege. The variety of character among these gentlemen is very great. I know of a distinguished philosopher, a F.R.S., who, finding that prolonged intellectual work does not suit his health, has taken to the road, and does very respectably in his new vocation. A case transpired some time ago of a clergyman, who was a chaplain to one of the London charities, who, having only Sunday duty, devoted his week-day hours to travelling as a bagman. These men have often a keen intellectual life. Such portraitures as those in *Orley Farm* or in *Green Lanes and Meadow Paths* quite fail to do them justice. Their weak point is the deficiency of knowledge and education; but there is often a peculiar freshness and power which reminds one of the fine talk

which used to go on in sanded inn-parlours in the Johnsonian days of the last century. The faculty of observation is often preternaturally sharpened; there is a frankness and audacity of thought, and frequently an enviable power of expression. The wonder arises how men who get up early and work hard all day can afford to sit up so late and talk so earnestly and so well. There was a great philosopher who acquired vast stores of information on the principle of always talking to a shoemaker about shoes. If the commercial traveller will only talk to you about his special business—which he probably hates, and does not care to discuss out of business hours—the chances are that you will learn something. The chances are, however, that he will degenerate into talking about himself, or about the merits and demerits of his firm. The commercial traveller who has tired out his connection and has outlived his energy has often a sorrowful tale to tell. It must be said, greatly to their credit, that no men have a truer insight into their own social conditions. They have provided schools for their children, and provident societies for their old age. We may be pretty sure of being excused for speaking about a class of men who have made the fortunes of such houses as the Leafs and the Copestakes, and who form an integral part in the system of British commerce.

But let us look at this prince of commercial travellers, who did so much to build up the fortunes of the great house in Bow Churchyard. It will not be necessary to say very much about him, as Dr. Smiles has once for all told the story so effectively. He was only twenty-three when he was so formidable a rival, as a traveller, to

Messrs. Groucock and Copestake that they took him into partnership. We need not follow Dr. Smiles into details in which Mr. Moore did a few things which, as a wiser man or as a more opulent man, he would not have done. He worked hard that he might marry his former master's daughter. Like the fortunate apprentice who became Lord Mayor, he did so. For the matter of that, he might have become Lord Mayor of London himself; he might probably have been member for the City of London, if he had cared for it. 'I believe,' he said, 'that I never could have surmounted the difficulties and hardships which I had to encounter but for the thought of her. I thought of her while going my rounds by day, and I thought of her while travelling by coach at night. The thought of her was my greatest stimulus to exertion.' There is generally a *her* which keeps each man's world of business in its constant cycle and epicycle. Happy the man who has such a pure and genuine love to throw such an iridescent line over his dull pathway, and to save him from the debasement and sensuality of an evil age! Moore worked sixteen or eighteen hours a day. He sat up two nights in the week. He spent his Sundays in balancing his accounts. He must have had a constitution of iron and a front of brass. He considered that every salesman ought to be able to work his sixteen hours a day. At last he saw the necessity of exercise and change. When his health was giving way, he must often have meditated whether the game was worth the candle. He went over to New York for a change; but at New York he of course busied himself in laces. There he met Stewart of the Broadway, the greatest dry-goods merchant in the

world. It would be amusing if one of our industrial biographers were to write a dialogue, after the manner of Walter Savage Landor, between Stewart and Moore. By and by a change came over the spirit of the man's dream. The tender human heart broke through the cerements of business. To use the phrase of his friend Charles Dickens, 'mankind was his business; the dealings of his trade were but as a drop of water in the ocean of his business.' He began to take a living human interest in the hands that he employed. He remembered that they had brains and hearts as well as hands. He came to them as Boaz came to his reapers, saying, 'The Lord bless you!' and there were very many who learned to say, as the reapers did to Boaz, 'The Lord be with you!' He took the deepest interest in his own poor wild country of Northumberland, which learned to bless him through all its length and breadth. He never forgot his own class. When he took his big house in Kensington-park-gardens, his first guests were the young men and the young women in the City, to whom he gave a ball. He was a zealous supporter of all the charities connected with commercial travellers. But his charities were not limited to the circle of his own special affinities. Through his friends, the City Missionaries, he paid the marriage-fees of thousands of persons who ought to have been married, and were not. It was found after his death that he had often spent as much as sixteen thousand a year in charity. It would be wearisome to enumerate the charities to which he contributed. A friend tells the writer that he would often spend whole days in the office writing cheques for the different claimants for charity who presented themselves.

And all the while he unveiled a humble sincere nature. 'I trust that I am beginning to see and feel the folly and vanity of the world and its pleasures. As Newton says, I know what the world can do and what it cannot do. It cannot soothe a wounded conscience like mine, or enable me to feel that I could meet death with comfort. I feel a constant conflict of conscience with inclination, of the desire to do right against the promptings of evil. I feel that I am as unstable as water—poor, weak, and sinful. . . . I have never seen the use of hoarding up money. We may gather riches, but we never know who is to spend them. God preserve me against the sin of covetousness. It is a curse that eats out the heart and dries up the soul of a man.' It is true of many 'a fortune made in business:'

'To him unknown descends the unguarded
store,
Or wanders, Heaven-directed, to the
poor.'

Mr. Moore was never happier than when he filled his house in town or country with hundreds of his poorer friends. What particularly strikes one about Mr. Moore is, how thoroughly he appreciated the modern spirit—the *Zeit-geist*, as Matthew Arnold calls it. Although he moved in the old religious grooves, in some points he was distinctly in advance of his age. For instance, the great problem in the educational future of the country is how to connect the common schools with the Universities; how to construct a system by which the infant of a parish school may be developed into the University man. In the way in which he dealt with his Cumberland poor, Mr. Moore showed that he had mastered the conditions of this problem. Moreover, he helped many young men

to become clergymen; and when they became clergymen, he still helped them to fight their way through the world. To quote a couplet which Mr. Gladstone has erroneously ascribed to George Herbert,

'Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet and blossom in the dust.'

It is a remarkable fact that in the long-run moral goodness holds its own with intellectual power, and even with genius; fashion and fortune being left nowhere in the race. Had Mr. Moore sought sedulously for fame, he could not have more surely attained it by his course of unselfish abnegation. Having spoken with hearty appreciation of his character, one criticism remains to be stated. A great deal of Mr. Moore's life is derived from his own diary—a diary which, we believe, was intended for publication. A fact of this kind, to a certain extent, vitiates autobiography. The two truest autobiographies in the whole world are respectively the *Confessions of St. Augustine* and the *Confessions of Rousseau*. Otherwise we have learned to suspect all autobiographical literature. They are too uniformly *en bon*, unless by a penitential fit they happen to be altogether *en laid*. But, after allowing for this variable element, enough remains, in this instance, to adorn and consecrate 'a fortune made in business.'

But let us take a glance at this famous place of business. It is popularly called Bow Churchyard, Cheapside. Whether it really is the churchyard identified with 'the great bell of Bow'—a veritable churchyard once sown with 'the cold *hic jacets* of the dead'—is an archaeological point which we shall not pause to discuss. It nearly fronts King-street, leading up to the Guildhall, and so is set in the midst of 'streaming Lon-

don's central roar.' The great business house extends from street to street in Cheapside, a range of some twenty houses, so to speak, with the front door of the firm coming out in the middle. Go at any time you like, you are sure to see Bow Churchyard very full. There are at times a whole army of clerks and commercial travellers to be seen. There are Pickford's ponderous wains or those belonging to the firm. It is a great spot for pigeons. There are now whole broods of pigeons to be seen daily in front of the Guildhall, and it is only a short flight here from thence. I suppose they are attracted by the leavings of grain supplied seemingly all day long to the horses which come and go. I am reminded of what I have seen on the Piazzetta of Venice, and what also may now be seen daily in the courtyard of the British Museum.

There is something which is truly imposing, something which gives an idea of the reality and extent of British trade, in contemplating this great mass of building, this hive of industry. To an outsider it is a vast animated machine. It is an intellectual treat to examine this remarkable organisation. All its pulses beat with rhythmic order. Each member of 'this body politic' is connected with each and with the whole. A general air of cheerfulness and brightness seems to belong to the *employés*. Each warehouseman, clerk, and commercial traveller identifies his own interests with the progress and repute of the firm. Each commercial traveller, as he hands in his initialed order, knows that it is something to his account. Each knows that he has his definite chances of appreciation and promotion. People may have lived in London for years, and not have realised how great a Lon-

don sight may be found in 'a house of business.' Every day hundreds sit down to dine in the great dining-hall. The place has its library and reading-room. It has, or at least it had at one time, its own chaplain, and some of the greatest divines and orators of the country have 'held forth' to the young people. This firm has indeed given extraordinary proofs of its regard and affection for its working members. Mr. Moore writes in his diary: 'I am proceeding to make large presents to each of our *employés* who has lived above five years in our service. I have long wished to do this, and Mr. Copestake' (the son of his old partner) 'willingly joins me in giving away between thirty-five and forty thousand pounds out of our private moneys to our old servants. They have done much by their industry and probity to enable us to do so.' We have never heard of any more princely act on the part of any of our merchants. Moore regularly had young men from the Bow Churchyard place of business to his home in the Lake country, and took them over the falls and mountains—a kindly tradition still preserved by some members of the firm. There is none of that overwork and late hours which in so many London houses are ruinous to the health and happiness of the young. The labour seems light, and the hours of labour easy. We are not surprised that something of the idea of feudality has grown up in that part of the modern system of things which might be thought most diverse to the feudal system.

This great palace of trade is not self-contained. It is but the centre of a vast invisible circle. It is the heart with a whole system of veins and arteries, or, to change the image, a huge tree

with infinite ramifications. We do not enter into statistics and detail, but convey our general impression 'how it strikes a visitor.' In this trade, as in all other trades, there is the constant effort to systematise, to abbreviate processes, to save intermediate profits, to be manufacturers as well as sellers. We know firms, for instance, which have their own sheep-farms, work up their own material, and transport it in their own ships. Now in the case of this great firm the original idea is lace. Of course the firm will buy lace, but it also manufactures its own lace in Nottingham. They have several manufactories in London. Then the business extends into all sorts of departments. At the recent Paris Exhibition all the world was enabled to admire the rich goods sent forth by the firm. All kinds of dry goods are to be found here: curtains and collars, shirtings, umbrellas, ornaments fit for a jeweller's shop, ostrich feathers; to the uninitiated a wild confusion of useful and beautiful things. One thing especially struck me. We hear a great deal at the present day of the want of technical education, of an absence of the art of design. It appeared to me that the reproach could not be levelled at this firm. There seemed to me to be a great variety of beauty and design. Goods were brought here from the marts of all nations; from the laces of the neighbouring Low Countries to the far-off lands of China and Japan. These again are distributed over all seas to all havens. The firm has a great many houses of business. Thus they have a house at Brighton, others at Paris, Manchester, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Plymouth, Bristol, Norwich, Portsea, Glasgow, Dublin, and so on. All the heavy costs of the transference of stock are

avoided. Thus such a house dominates in many directions through various trades. There is practically no limit to the extension of such a business in the new *dépôts* that may be opened, or the fresh departments that may be taken up. The great point of departure of renewed success was when Mr. Moore had returned from America and set up the lace-mill at Nottingham, giving employment to several hundred hands. Then the firm 'pulled down their barns and built greater.' The former moderate buildings expanded into the present large block of buildings. Mr. Moore was once or twice requested to stand as a candidate for Nottingham, which probably will always be the headquarters of the lace business. We wonder how far there is any connection between lace and Liberalism, and how far the Nottingham 'lambs' are identified with those frail and beautiful fabrics. The present writer was once requested by a great society to deliver a lecture in the town of Nottingham. The subject was a somewhat difficult one, which had failed to gather large audiences in fashionable watering-places. There was a crowded meeting; he was heard with a gratifying degree of attention; and there was afterwards a discussion, mainly among working people, marked by great freshness and ability, such as his Nottingham friends assured him was characteristic of the place. A sturdy independent character belongs to these Nottingham lace-makers; and one would be glad to know that here at least there is a freedom from the fear of strikes, and that kindly relationships exist between masters and men.

As you go over the house there is one circumstance which strikes you with peculiar interest. You observe in one of the upper stories

a bust of John Milton. A portion of this vast range of buildings covers the site of the house where John Milton was born. I remember that the Norwich philosopher, Sir Thomas Brown, who says his life was not a life, but a miracle of thirty years, was also born in Cheapside. One is pleased to see in this busy haunt of commerce a recognition and memorial of our great national poet. I should be glad to see more of a combination between 'fortunes made in business' and the fortunes of literature, science, and art. There have been signs and seasons when intellectual and industrial pursuits have been closely united. Such was the time when Sir Thomas Gresham founded his professorship, and Sir Thomas White the latest of Oxford colleges, before Keble rose. In the commerce of this country these merchants are princes; and while it is something to relieve want, it is also something to promote industry. If it is much to promote religion and philanthropy, surely it is much also to be identified with politics and history, song and story, with literature and art. I confess I was mightily pleased with this bust of Milton. It took my fancy hugely. I suppose there is hardly any other business place in London which has such an association. After all, Milton will be remembered when even Moore is forgotten. What a contrast there is between all the suggestions of modern luxury which we find in this crowded place of business, and the 'plain living and high thinking' of the great poet and politician of the Puritan domination! For a moment, amid the rapid noiseless movements, amid the blaze of colour, amid the concourse of people, the mind travelled back to traffickers—the honourable of

the earth. In the great Italian cities of the Middle Ages there was such a combination. The great merchants have embalmed their memories in galleries and palaces, in statues and pictures, in the pages of poets and historians. When we speak of fortunes made in business one would rejoice in hearing of such fortunes consecrated to beneficent exalted ends, giving grace and stability to our institutions, achieving a worthy immortality for our merchant princes. In the case of the remarkable house which we are considering, we have seen that there has been one individual who has earned his niche in the history of London by a career of philanthropy which has few parallels. We should like to see something more in modern business to recall the old Miltonian era. It almost seemed for the moment, glancing at the bust, that the sweet sounds of that old renowned organ sounded in the spiritual ear, the organ sound also of the *periodus oratorica* of that massive Latin and English prose, the consummate music of his sonnets, lyrics, or heroic lines. The association was momentary, the illusion as brief as it was brilliant.

That old house vanished in the Great Fire. That old court which led up to it has been built over by the modern premises. But we feel sure that there is something sound in the association of ideas. There is something happy in this fortuitous connection between genius and business that suggests more of union between commerce and art, and that our merchant princes might in some degree resemble those of Florence and Venice.

It is unnecessary to speak of the *personæ* of the firm, gentlemen who help worthily to maintain the credit of the good City of London. Mr. Groucock, who originally founded it, has his name no longer represented. The Moore interest has also disappeared. Mr. Crampton is just deceased, leaving a son to occupy his place. The name of the head of the firm is still maintained. The gentleman who represents it is a barrister who, under the tuition of the well-known Rev. Mr. Wilkinson of Christ's, took mathematical honours at Cambridge, and has himself exhibited such a remarkable genius for industrial pursuits that he might properly obtain a chapter for himself.

VI.

JOHN LIEBIG, THE KING OF BOHEMIAN INDUSTRY.

In north-eastern Bohemia lies the small county of Braunau, surrounded by moderately high mountains. Its German population took possession of it many centuries ago, and is still distinguished by peculiar customs and costumes. In the centre of the valley, on the slope of a mountain and on the right bank of the small river Steine, there stands a Benedictine abbey. Its red-tiled roofs are seen from afar, and around it

are grouped houses of modest pretensions, and inhabited by about four thousand persons. This is the cloth-manufacturing town of Braunau, famous for the zeal it once displayed in the cause of the Reformation, by numerous fires which repeatedly almost entirely destroyed it, and frequently referred to at the present day as the native place of John Liebig, the greatest of Bohemian 'Lords of Industry.'

The first cloth-weavers settled at Braunau in the thirteenth century, at the invitation of Martin, the then abbot of the Benedictines. The most flourishing period of the Braunau cloth-manufacture was evidently when the red cloths of the town were famous throughout Europe, their reputation extending far into Turkey. It is only within recent times that this whilom celebrated article of export has partly lost its importance. The causes of this were various, but perhaps the most active was the remodelling of the Turkish army, and clothing it in uniforms after the European pattern, which rendered red cloths no longer necessary for that purpose.

In consequence of this, many of the cloth-weaving families were impoverished; the Liebigs, who were settled at Braunau long before the seventeenth century, were one of those families who thus suffered.

To this day they show a particularly poor-looking wooden house close to the palatial Benedictine abbey, that owns the domain of Braunau. This mean dwelling formed the sole possession of a cloth-weaver's family, consisting of father, mother, daughter, and two sons, the younger of whom, John, was born in June 1802. After a short attendance at an elementary school, the boy was apprenticed to a cloth-maker. He anxiously looked forward to the expiry of his four years' apprenticeship, first, because the ambitious youth chafed at the narrow business boundaries his native place presented to his aspiring mind; secondly, because he had no taste for the trade forced upon him; and thirdly, because his mother having, after his father's death, married a surgeon, living at home had become somewhat unpleasant.

The chief seat of the Bohemian

cloth manufacture is Reichenberg, in the district Bunzlau. Thither John, after bidding farewell to his friends, bent his steps. But his intention was not so much to look for work there as to discover a sphere of action, which the trade he disliked so much could not offer him. He was, however, not successful at first, and to maintain himself was compelled to stick to cloth-weaving a few years more. He felt miserable at the loom, which in those days, on account of the width of the cloth, had to be worked by two men; nor did his fellow-workmen like him, and they complained of his idleness, which in reality was a thorough ~~dislike~~ for his occupation. It ~~was~~ apparent that activity was his real life-element as soon as he had saved enough money to buy a small assortment of pedlar's wares, such as braces, ties, brushes, pipes, &c., with which he visited well-frequented inns and taverns. He was now in the right current. Soon after he effected a very successful speculation in ladies' tresses made of silk, which had then become the fashion, proving how active and indefatigable John could be, in seizing the chance of a profitable undertaking, and in carrying it out promptly and energetically.

In the mean time his elder brother Francis and his sister Pauline had come to Reichenberg. John readily accepted their proposal to join them in opening a draper's shop, and at the same time, to make the attempt, by hiring a few looms, to manufacture certain silk goods. In both departments John reserved to himself the management of all business transactions, his brother attending to the manufacturing and internal concerns of the business. Even then John displayed great talents for management and organisation; talents,

which, as we shall see by and by, led to unusual results.

In the year 1828, partly accident, and partly the practical glance of the man, laid the foundation stone of his subsequent industrial preëminence.

In the year 1806 Christian Christopher, Count Clam-Gallas, the father of the subsequent owner of the domain of Reichenberg, had established in a one-storied building, surrounded by swampy meadows and impassable woods in the neighbourhood of Reichenberg, a cotton mill, and works for dyeing wool. This primitive establishment, in spite of high patronage and government protection, did not pay; it passed into the hands of a citizen of Reichenberg, who carried it on for twenty years; finally it was turned into a calico factory. In 1828 the establishment fell under the hammer. The brothers Liebig bought it: a one-storied building with a small yard, a water-wheel of four-horse power, and a small dwelling-house—such was the factory. John, in purchasing it, had the intention of establishing on this spot an entirely new branch of industry, viz. the manufacture of merino, camlet, and lasting; truly so extensive a project that the elder brother preferred leaving its difficult and dangerous execution to the more daring John. Consequently they dissolved partnership, and Francis devoted himself to the drapery business, which was doing well.

John Liebig's speculation prospered under his active and careful management. In 1832 the premises had to be enlarged, and calendering and printing works were erected; three years later on, in 1835, steam-dyeing works, and eventually in 1844, after a terrible fire, a warping mill.

In 1845 John made prepara-

tions on a large scale for the manufacture of orleans and mohair, and in the same year erected a warehouse three stories high, to which was attached an imposing dwelling-house, which also contained the offices and packing-rooms. Thanks to the exertions of Liebig, the road across the Giants' Mountains (*Riesengebirge*) was constructed, which of course largely benefited his business, so much so that in 1849 there were already 800 looms, after the English pattern, at work; extensive printing works were established in 1850, a worsted mill was built in 1851, in 1854 a gas factory to supply the 2500 lights required about the works, and finally in 1855 an enormous warehouse, of great height, for the storing of woollen goods.

It will thus be seen that the desolate cotton-mill in the marshy valley has grown by the energy of one man into a large and flourishing establishment, a village or small town of itself. The number of hands employed amounts to more than 2000; the motors are upwards of 900 horse power; the annual consumption of coal amounts to about 8000 tons, besides large quantities of wood; the annual value of the produce exceeds two and half millions of florins. Dyeing works at Nussdorf, near Vienna, form an appendage to the chief establishment.

But John Liebig's activity and enterprise did not stop even there. It is one of the distinguishing features of his mental acuteness to discover localities where treasures of as yet unappropriated natural power lie hidden. At Svarov (district Tannwald) the current of the river Desse, there increased by the rapid Kamenitz, together with a population needing work, offered opportunities

for carrying out extensive projects. Scarcely had Liebig arrived at this conclusion when he in 1844 erected cotton and worsted mills. Five years after, a building at Haratitz, on the same river, was turned into a cotton and twist factory, with upwards of 400 looms and more than 1600 hands. But still those two mills did not supply the works at Reichenberg with the quantity of yarn they were craving for; hence a third mill on a large scale was erected at Eisenbrod, situate on the rapid Iser, rushing down from the Giants' Mountains. Since the erection of the factory, the town, which was fast decaying, has been greatly improved. In the factory 400 hands find occupation.

After having done so much, John Liebig might have been supposed to be entitled to repose. But his ever-active mind could not rest. Though the textile manufacture may be considered as his principal occupation, he did not confine himself to it, but drew a number of profitable pursuits within the sphere of his already widely extended operations. His attention was directed to Hungary. There the soil has as yet a grand future before it, awaiting only the labourers; and only foreign, mostly German, immigrants called forth the beginnings of a remunerative industry in the country, rich in wood and water-power, coal, precious and other metals, wine, fruit, and cereals. Liebig had noticed the successes of the Bohemian glass manufacture, and determined to transplant them on Hungarian soil. Certainly extraordinary difficulties had to be overcome, difficulties which might have checked a bolder spirit than his. True, in the Carpathian valley on the frontiers of Siebenbürgen, which is traversed by the Bistritz, he had

for a moderate sum acquired a handsome territory with extensive beech-woods, but two conditions had to be satisfied before the decayed glass-factory could be made to pay—men and roads. Both were provided. German workmen, glass-blowers and others, settled there with their families, and quickly (in 1851) there arose the village of Schwarzwald, with its saw-mill, flour-mill, glass-works and grinding shops, together with the cheerful dwellings of the officials and workmen, altogether about 500 hands. But this industrial colony seemed entirely shut out from the world by high and pathless mountains; and as long as the goods manufactured there had to be exported by slow caravans of lumbering wagons and carts, there could be but small profits. Liebig determined himself to construct a good road, which he did at an expense of 150,000 florins. It was twelve and a half miles long, with no less than eighty-four stone bridges. The outlay for founding and developing the colony of Schwarzwald was thus increased to 800,000 florins; the value of the glass annually produced amounts to about 100,000 florins.

But the wonderfully active man also utilised the internal treasures of the earth. In 1862 he purchased the slate quarries of Ratschitz near Eisenbrod, giving employment all the year round to from two to three hundred hands, slates to the value of about 40,000 florins being annually sold. At the same time he erected in the vicinity two lime-kilns, yielding about the same amount per annum. In 1863 he acquired by purchase the copper-mine of Rochlitz, which, having been abandoned as unproductive by its former owners, began to yield profit in Liebig's hands. From

one hundred weight of copper half an ounce of silver is extracted. The annual value of the copper ore amounts to about 15,000 florins, and that of the silver to about 18,000 florins. Liebig further possesses at Guttenstein, in Lower Austria, a copper rolling mill, whose products are sent as far as Italy and Asia Minor; and to all these establishments, all the property of, and managed till within the last few years by, one man, we must further add the following: a flour-mill at Haratitz, an extensive bakery, a brewery on the domain of Smirschitz, a saw-mill, and a looking-glass factory at Elisenthal in Bohemia!

Surely there are few lords of industry who can rival John Liebig's many-sided and grand activity. The king of Bohemian industry employs from five to six thousand hands, who receive from him the sum of upwards of one million florins annual wages. But praise beyond that awarded to the successful speculator is due to him. He was one of the first of Bohemian employers on a large scale who, without pressure from without, endeavoured to raise the moral and physical welfare of his workmen by means of benevolent institutions. As early as 1842 he laid down the rule that every workman who had been continuously in his employ for one year should, after that period, be entitled to the gratuitous services of the factory surgeon and medicines at his employer's cost. As long as incapacitated from work, he was to receive half his wages, and in case of death a sum of from six to ten florins was allowed to his widow. This involved an expenditure of from ten to seventeen thousand florins per annum, which, however, was amply compensated by the greater zeal with which

the hands performed their work. To abolish the hitherto unsatisfactory methods of cooking and taking their food prevalent among the working people of Reichenberg, and thus to improve their bodily health, Liebig founded large kitchens and eating-houses, in which daily two thousand portions of soup, meat, vegetables, and coffee were sold at very low prices to the hands employed in the factories. The bread came from his own mills and bakeries. But dwellings and mental food also were provided. Having with this view visited the chief English and French manufacturing districts, Liebig established workmen's dwellings, whose number already exceeds forty. Each dwelling cost five thousand florins, and is intended for eight families, whose rent is so small as to yield scarcely two per cent on the outlay. Further anxious for the welfare of his *employés*, and especially that of their children, who are to be the workmen of the future, Liebig erected two schools—one at Svarov and the other at Schwarzwald, each for eighty children; moreover, a Sunday-school at Reichenberg, and at the same place a Children's Home, where Fröbel's method of instruction was adopted. It is a very elegant and cheerful-looking building, surrounded by a large garden.

Such are the performances of a man who in 1828 began the world with almost nothing, and in less than twenty-five years realised a fortune, now reckoned by millions. And his bitterest enemies cannot attribute his success to the favour of the blind goddess of Fortune. It was the outcome of energy, thought, and enterprise; of moderation in prosperity; of the absence of false ambition and ostentatiousness. Ever aiming at the practical,

Liebig saw from the first that two objects were essential to success—the improvement of the means of communication, and greater facilities for the circulation of money. These objects he pursued with unremitting zeal; to their consummation he owes his successes, at the same time rendering such services to his adopted home, Reichenberg, as posterity only will fully appreciate. To him is due the construction of the Reichenberg-Zittau and Löbau railway, which connects those localities with the Saxon lines, as well as the Reichenberg and Pardubitz railway, forming the connecting link with the Vienna line. He hastened the construction of the Giants' Mountains road by at least ten years; as first president of the Reichenberg Chamber of Commerce, he at once raised it to a high state of activity. He was one of the chief promoters of the now flourishing Reichenberg savings-bank; yielding to his urgent representations, the privileged Austrian National Bank, not particularly favourably inclined towards industrial interests, at last condescended to found a branch discount bank at Reichenberg.

Liebig did not escape misfortunes. In 1848 a fire destroyed his weaving factory at Reichenberg; ten years after, a terrible inundation did damage to the amount of many hundred thousands of florins to the works at Reichenberg and Svarov. During the war of 1866 his factories were turned into hospitals, and the battle of Königgrätz was fought on his estates of Smirschitz and Horschenoves.

Envy, which in his case also could not appreciate one of the most prominent of self-made men, has had much fault to find with the *parvenu*; but thinking and

just men have not failed to testify to his real worth. After the London Exhibition of 1862, where he appeared as one of the chief representatives of Austrian industry, he was invested with the order of Franz-Joseph—an acknowledgment of his industrial activity. At the Paris Exhibition of 1867 his merits as a philanthropist and benefactor met with recognition; he received the only prize, which, in the class for Promotion of Popular Welfare, was allotted to Austria, and at the same time the cross of the Legion of Honour. In the previous year, when the Emperor, during his visit to the Bohemian battle-fields, had inspected Liebig's factories at Reichenberg, Liebig had been awarded, 'for his merits in promoting domestic industry,' the cross of the Iron Crown, third class, by which he was raised to the dignity of a baron. But the motto on his coat of arms, *Per laborem ad honorem*, will never allow him to forget that it is not idle repose, but constant activity, that establishes distinguished positions and leads to transcendent success.

The German biographer of Liebig, from whom much of the above is taken, after a review of all that the subject of his memoir has done, exclaims, 'All this was accomplished by the energy of one man within less than forty years. And it was no highly-cultivated intellect, developed and enriched by the study of the industrial and economic systems of the most advanced nations, that created and carried out all this, diffusing physical comfort and mental culture wherever there was scope for industrial enterprise. Simple common sense and an unbending will, self-denial, and an ennobling conviction of the dignity of labour did it all.'

THE GROWTH OF A SUBURB.

IN the rapid development of our material prosperity during the last few decades we have witnessed, in an immense number of cases, the growth of new towns, and of suburbs to old towns. Frequently the suburb has overshadowed the town, and has simply annexed the powerful neighbour to which it once clung as a parasite. In most instances there has been an exodus of the wealthy classes towards the west end of a city, which at one time would resemble a backwood settlement, and eventually becomes covered with gardens and palatial abodes. In Glasgow and Edinburgh the New Town almost dominates the Old Town, and at Liverpool every one who can afford it lives 'across the river.' The greatest examples of suburb-making are of course found in the metropolis. The long arms of London are year by year overtaking the pretty villages that once nestled in its rural neighbourhood. It is to be regretted that no civic ædileship has ever controlled the development of our great cities, though sporadic attempts have been made this way, and at the present time the subject receives much more attention than formerly. Something has been gained by picturesqueness in the attempt, though more has been lost both in convenience and magnificence. The way in which the great London suburbs have been developed is very remarkable. Not only have these suburbs been developed, but now other suburbs stretch beyond in endless development. There is no stopping the gigantic progress of

London. Charles I. tried to do so. It is not the least interesting part of the latest and best history of the Stuart period that we see that Charles I. had very enlightened notions respecting the proportion of population to area of space, and had far more regard for sanitary arrangements than has been the case for ages until comparatively recent times. All the fields lying to the back of Buckingham Palace Gardens once belonged to an old farmhouse, and could have been purchased for a mere trifle. One noble lord sent his steward to buy them, but was told by his servant that he could not in conscience pay the sum demanded; a sum for the fee simple which was not a tithe of what is now the annual rent. It fell into the hands of the Grosvenor family, who have been the great suburb-makers of western London. It has unfortunately happened that very few suburbs have been laid out with that regularity with which the Duke of Westminster and Mr. Cubitt have arranged the regions of Pimlico and Belgravia. In many parts of London and other great cities they have grown up in an extremely haphazard way. They have not the unity and splendour of South Kensington or Belgravia, but they long retain a quaint and picturesque character of their own. Here are the old houses of a manorial character which once stood fairly at a distance from the busy town. They have their breadths of park and meadow, their shady avenues, their quaint gardens, their lodges and drives. As you go along the

suburban roads, you meet with antique tumble-down cottages, which curiously contrast with the new villas springing up wherever freehold ground can be secured. The value of land rises immensely in these suburbs, and the grand old houses and the dependent cottages are liable to be speedily swept away. Even Holland Park, the greatest of our metropolitan gems, has suffered, and much of the estate has been let out in 'eligible building sites.' There are still a few London suburbs which have not suffered so much as the rest, Hampstead especially; but all over the country the phenomenon of the growth of new suburbs is to be witnessed. We know of a noble lord who frankly explained to the landlord of a new suburb that he should pay no rent for the first year or two, as he was a desirable tenant, and would help to attract people to the neighbourhood. A consideration of this kind often attracts economical people to a suburb. The rents are moderate, and very frequently the 'half-quarter,' or even more than the half-quarter, is 'given.' This is sometimes by no means so economical as might be supposed. There is a wise proverb to the effect that if you build a house you should first lend it to your enemy, next to your friend, and finally live in it yourself. Brick houses do not always prove water-tight for the first inhabitants. Then again, the expense devolves upon you of laying out the garden. Besides, you find that all kinds of things require to be done in the new house of a new suburb. If you have in addition to pay a doctor's bill you have not really made so very much by your bargain. You begin sorrowfully to meditate on the ancient saw that wise men build houses for fools to live in them.

It is a great thing when the whole plan of the suburb has been carefully elaborated; when terraces and squares, with gardens and ornamental spaces, have been harmoniously constructed. It is a remarkable fact that in laying out an estate it is often found necessary to build a church and a parsonage, and to find a popular parson. There have been instances where the builder and the landowner have guaranteed some elegant clergyman of the Establishment 1000*l.* a year for his income. It is understood that the services are to be musical and fashionable. A chapel soon follows the church, if, indeed, it has not anticipated it. Perhaps in architectural splendour it fully equals its ecclesiastical rival. It is found that these institutions serve as a nucleus to all the ranges of dwellings which gather around them. Soon the suburb is welded into a regular ecclesiastical district, and the ecclesiastical district becomes an independent parish. If any tithes are appropriated from the parent church it becomes a vicarage or rectory. The first-class suburb is soon consolidated into an integral part of London, and presently begins to fling out suburbs of its own. It is curious to watch the gradual formation. A suburb is bright and spick and span when it is really made. But the place has a frightfully scrubby appearance during the course of formation. It is very like chin and lip in the process of growing beard and moustache. The place looks scrubby and scrappy. You are in the immediate vicinity of an enormous brickfield. The brickfield is not a very pleasant prospect for the eye to dwell on, and to most noses its odours are unlovely. Then you trace all around the melancholy conflict of brick and mortar with the reliquary graces of the vanish-

ing country life. If people are wise they will at this stage of development secure large open spaces which will be useful for health and recreation when all the neighbourhood is built over. It is not at all unlikely that some great institution will snatch at a large plot of ground in the immediate vicinity of town at a reasonable rate. You may be pretty certain of a lunatic asylum or two. Other signs and circumstances follow. The omnibus now starts a stage more remote from Charing Cross. Perhaps a tramway, spider-like, extends its iron arms. The directors of the Metropolitan or District Railway devise a new station. A whole crowd of enterprising people who are always on the look-out for 'openings' rush forward. Quite a large number of people procure the business of house-agents. A huge coal-dépôt is sure to be established. A flaring public-house is the point of departure for the omnibus. Then ham-and-beef shops begin to flourish with a rank luxuriance. The long jets of foliated gas project ribbon-like into the streets. An enterprising chemist, who has two

or three shops already, thinks it worth while to establish a new one. A new medical man pitches his tent, and thinks that he will try his chance of building up a practice, since he cannot buy one ready-made. Then the schools are sure to come; the college for young gentlemen, who will wear mortarboards with coloured tassels, and the seminaries for young ladies, which are sometimes not much better than 'adventure' schools.

Such is the growth of a suburb when it has been permitted to grow up of its own accord, unsystematically and without any provision. The process may be witnessed in many parts of London, and in various great cities. If the suburb is destined to prove a fashionable one, the unsightly excrescences are cleared; and that is effected after much delay and expense, which might easily have been avoided in the first instance. It is only in a very few instances that we have anything to compete with those new boulevards and gardens which so many of our countrymen now contemplate with admiring despair in the new quarters of Paris.

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THE MISSING DEED.

A Story of Chancery-lane.

CHAPTER I.

‘THREE HUNDRED POUNDS REWARD. Lost, a parchment document, being an Indenture of Mortgage, dated the 17th day of February 1845, and made between Henry Fortess of the first part, Ralph Howard and Frederick Pollock of the second part, William Henry Austin and Emily Austin his wife of the third part, and Thomas Burt and Sidney Forrest Dysart of the fourth part. Whoever shall bring the same to the office of Messrs. Sharpe & Floyd, Solicitors, of No. 99 Bedford-row, shall receive the above reward.’

‘No, Mr. Morpeth; I am sorry to say, no news whatever.’

The speaker was Mr. Sharpe, the senior partner of the firm of Sharpe & Floyd, whose advertisement, as above, had appeared at intervals in all the leading newspapers during nearly six months prior to the date of our story. Mr. Sharpe was seated in his special sanctum, to which none but the more important clients of the firm were admitted. On the opposite side of the table sat a middle-aged gentleman, whose look of eager anxiety and nervous haste was in striking contrast to the placid self-possession of his solicitor. Mr. Morpeth’s impatience scarcely gave him time even to remove his hat or gloves before he broke out with the anxious question, ‘Well, Mr. Sharpe, any news of the missing deed?’ and received the reply above quoted.

‘But, good Heavens! my dear sir, in another fortnight the cause comes on for hearing! What on earth is to be done?’

‘We can apply for an adjournment, if you like; but of course it is only putting off the evil day.’

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You know my opinion about the matter.’

‘That the deed is no longer in existence? I can’t—I *won’t* believe it. At any rate let us make another trial. I would willingly give a thousand pounds if it could only be recovered.’

‘Quite hopeless, my dear sir. You have already increased the reward from one hundred pounds to three. If the deed was still in existence, the holder would have been only too glad to restore it for a fifth part of such a reward. You may make up your mind that it has been destroyed, either purposely or accidentally; I cannot say which, and I don’t like to conjecture; but in any case you may rest assured that the reason it is not produced is, that it is beyond production; in fact, that it no longer exists.’

‘It is all very well for you to talk in that philosophical manner; but how on earth are we to prove our case without it?’

‘It will be uphill-work, I grant; but as our leader, Mr. Brass, told you in consultation last week, the case is by no means hopeless. The deed being lost, and no copy in existence, parol evidence will be admissible. The difficulty is (and it is no use mincing the matter), the evidence in question will be exclusively that of interested parties; and, considering the very large amount that is at stake, that is a point the other side will naturally make the most of.’

‘No doubt they will; that is just what drives me frantic; and you talk of it as calmly as if you

were discussing the telephone or the last new planet. I know, and you know, that my cause is just and right. To think that I and my poor dear wife, the very soul of honour, should have to stand up in the witness-box, and be insulted with insinuations that we are swearing falsely for the sake of a few thousands. Good God! it makes my blood boil to think of it. I feel almost inclined to say I will give up the whole thing rather than face such a horrible ordeal.'

'Nay, my dear sir,' said Mr. Sharpe, alarmed at the threatened collapse of a promising litigation, 'that would never do. To give in at this stage would be tantamount to an admission, with most people at any rate, that you had had no case all along. No, no; you must try the fortune of war. The first struggle will not be final in any case. If you are beaten, of course you will carry the case to the Court of Appeal; and I know the other side intend to do so, if we should be fortunate enough to get the best of it.'

'A second chapter of torture,' groaned Mr. Morpeth. 'I really believe it will almost kill my wife. I tell you what, Mr. Sharpe, at any rate we will make one more effort. Put in the advertisement again—every day until the trial comes off; and make the reward five hundred pounds.'

Mr. Sharpe shrugged his shoulders.

'It won't make any difference, you may rest assured; but as the reward is not likely to be claimed, it doesn't matter much whether you offer three hundred or five.'

He touched the bell and took up the *Times*, which lay open upon the table. A smart young fellow entered in answer to his summons, and he continued, handing him the paper,

'Here, Halliday, copy out this

advertisement again, but making the reward *five* hundred pounds instead of three; and then take it round to the advertising agent, and ask him to insert it in all the dailies for the next fortnight. We'll try the experiment, at any rate, Mr. Morpeth; but I'm afraid I can't encourage you to hope much from the result.'

'It's a forlorn hope, Mr. Sharpe, I admit, but I won't lose even a shadow of a chance if I can help it. If it only brings back the deed, I shall regard my five hundred pounds as extremely well invested, I can assure you.'

CHAPTER II.

TOM HALLIDAY was copying-clerk and messenger in the office of Messrs. Sharpe & Floyd. He was just two-and-twenty, wrote a capital hand, had a capital appetite, and earned eighteen shillings a week; which till lately had sufficed for his moderate needs. We say till lately; for, some few months previously, Tom had, in a rash moment, fallen in love, which he found to lead him into extravagant outlay in pomatum and neckties, and in various ways to constitute a considerable tax on his modest resources. His sweetheart was the daughter of a worthy widow, who was care-taker, or 'laundress,' of a certain house in Chancery-lane, in which Messrs. Sharpe & Floyd had formerly rented offices. Hence Tom's acquaintance with Mrs. Moyse and her daughter. Bessie Moyse worked as a milliner at a shop in Regent-street; and it was an understood thing that when Tom and she had saved up money enough to furnish two rooms, they were to be married; but as in the course of six months their united savings only amounted to five-and-thirty shil-

lings and some odd coppers, their engagement appeared likely to be rather a long one. On Saturday afternoons the young people were in the habit of taking a long walk together, followed by tea at Chancery-lane — a festive ceremony which was only marred by the presence of uncle Keckwidge, an aged relative who resided with Mrs. Moyse. It was a family tradition that uncle Keckwidge had been rather a fascinating dog in his day; but he was now very infirm, not to say childish. He was very deaf, and, as a rule, understood little or nothing of what was going on around him; but every now and then caught one half of a sentence, and invariably that half which the rest of the company would have preferred that he should not hear. He had further a trying habit of plunging irrelevantly into the conversation, following up some train of thought of his own, very often of an uncomfortably personal character.

The conversation which we have reported between Mr. Morpeth and his solicitor took place on a Saturday. Tom Halliday copied out the advertisement as directed, and duly left it with the agent. By the time he had done this it was three o'clock, and with a light heart he hung up his well-worn office-coat, gave his hat an extra polish, and then started off to a certain tree in the Regent's Park, where he found Bessie Moyse already awaiting him.

After some indescribable proceeding on the part of Tom, which caused Bessie to exclaim, 'Well, I never, sir! And with so many people looking too!' they joined arm in arm, and proceeded to hear the band in the Zoological Gardens. This, however, they did after a manner of their own. They had discovered that the music was equally effect-

ive (and a shilling cheaper) from the outside of the gardens, and, as Tom justly remarked, they didn't want to be bothered with animals, so they promenaded up and down outside the palings to the inspiring strains of the martial music within.

The main topic of conversation, not unnaturally, was Mr. Morpeth's advertisement; and the young people amused themselves by discussing, hypothetically, what use *they* would make of the reward, supposing that they were lucky enough to find the missing deed. Various plans were suggested; but it was finally decided that Bessie should set up a tobacconist's and stationery business, in aid of Tom's legal earnings. At first Tom was rather inclined to undertake the tobacconist's portion of the business himself, as he had an idea that he could serve cigars and vesuvians with considerable artistic finish; but this was overruled by Bessie, who would not hear of his giving up his 'profession.' That idea was therefore abandoned, Tom justly remarking that, as he wasn't at all likely to find the deed, it really wasn't of very much consequence. After a somewhat lengthened stroll, the young couple made their way back to Chancery-lane; Tom purchasing a pint of shrimps on his way, as a contribution to Mrs. Moyse's refreshment arrangements. They found the table spread, a pot of home-made jam and a plate of watercresses shedding lustre on the festive board; the kettle boiling on the hob; and Mrs. Moyse bustling about in the final preparations for tea-making. Uncle Keckwidge sat, with his hat on, in his accustomed place by the fire.

On Mrs. Moyse's first taking possession, some years before, of the housekeeper's apartments in Bedford-row, uncle Keckwidge had

complained of a draught, and had put on his hat as a protection. As the rest of the family did not perceive any draught, and rashly ventured to question its existence, uncle Keckwidge, who could never brook contradiction, became firmly convinced that there was a very severe draught indeed, and had continued to wear his hat indoors as well as out ever since. He had never looked with a very favourable eye on Tom Halliday, and had occasionally caused Bessie considerable embarrassment by uttering aloud private reflections to his prejudice. On the present occasion the first greetings were scarcely over, when uncle Keckwidge, who had been eyeing Tom over in a critical manner, remarked to himself, but quite audibly: 'The idea of a girl like our Bess takin' up with such a pair o' trousers as that. Lor, I believe the women will have anything nowadays;' a remark which caused Tom, though not naturally bashful, to tuck his legs hastily under his chair, and Bessie to look very hot and uncomfortable; Mrs. Moyse making as much clatter as possible with the teacups, and endeavouring to make believe that nobody heard the observation; while uncle Keckwidge continued to munch his bread-and-butter, in profound unconsciousness of having said anything at all offensive.

'You mustn't take any notice of uncle, Tom,' whispered Bessie. 'You know what he is. It's only his fun. He's always taking one off.'

'He needn't take off my trousers, though,' said Tom; and then, finding that he had (quite unintentionally) made a kind of joke, he tried hard to look as if he had said it on purpose.

'*Thomas!*' said Bessie, pretending to be dreadfully shocked. 'Thomas, I am perfectly ashamed

of you! It would serve you right not to let you have any shrimps.'

'Forgive me this once,' said Tom; 'I'll never do so any more. I wonder whether the old buffer would like a shrimp. Try a monster of the deep, Mr. Keckwidge,' he continued, putting a spoonful on the old man's plate. 'And I shouldn't break my heart if one of 'em got crossways and choked you, you old image!' he added, in a lower tone.

'For shame, sir!' said Bessie; 'a poor harmless old man like that, and you want to choke him!'

'Why couldn't he leave my trousers alone, then?' said Tom, still by no means pacified.

Here uncle Keckwidge, who had been looking about uneasily, as if in search of something, pulled a large black pin out of his neck-tie, and began digging vigorously at a shrimp as though it were a periwinkle, though apparently without satisfactory result.

'No, uncle,' said Mrs. Moyse, taking the pin away from him; 'not like that. You're thinking of winkles; these are shrimps.' (We grieve to confess that the good lady pronounced the word as 's'rimps'.)

'Then what did he say they was winkles for?' said uncle Keckwidge, much aggrieved.

'I didn't,' said Tom indignantly. 'I never said anything of the sort.'

'Young man,' replied uncle Keckwidge, with dignity, 'you said distinctly winkles; I noticed it particular. I'm very partial to winkles; but shrimps ain't no account.'

'Come, uncle,' said Bessie, 'you know the last time Tom brought winkles you said you preferred shrimps.'

'We ain't had winkles,' resumed the old man, quite ignoring his niece's remark, 'not since that

day when we found the earwig in my Sunday hat. And then they was in a pie!

'No, no, uncle,' said Mrs. Moyse, laughing; 'that wasn't winkles; that was eels.'

'I dunno about that,' said uncle Keckwidge thoughtfully; 'but I know you pick 'em out with a pin. With a pin!' he repeated at intervals, like an echo, fainter and fainter each time. 'With a pin!' And then relapsed into silence.

By way of changing the subject, Tom began to tell Mrs. Moyse how the great case of *Davis v. Morpeth* was expected to come off on Wednesday week, and how the most important title-deed was mysteriously missing, and Mr. Morpeth had offered a reward of five hundred pounds to any one who would restore it.

Uncle Keckwidge brightened up suddenly at the word 'reward.'

'I know,' he said, nodding his head sagely. 'I see the bill myself, at the baker's round the corner. A tarrier-dog with one eye, answers to the name o' Bob. Ten shillin' reward.'

'No, no, uncle,' said Bessie; 'that's not the reward we were talking about. Tom was telling us about a paper that was lost, and the gentleman offers a heap of money to get it back again. Five hundred golden pounds! Only think of that!'

'Five hundred pounds for finding a tarrier-dog,' replied uncle Keckwidge. 'It ain't likely. Not if he was ever such a stunner for rats.'

'I didn't say anything about terrier-dogs, Mr. Keckwidge,' explained Tom. 'I said a deed, Mr. Morpeth's deed.'

'You distinctly said a tarrier-dog, with one eye,' said uncle Keckwidge. 'And as for saying you'll be d—d, that don't alter it. Nor it ain't manners either.'

'I never said anything of the kind!' shouted Tom. 'I said it was a deed that was lost, a parchment document.'

'I said all along it was a dog you meant,' said the old man, only catching the last word of the sentence. 'A tarrier-dog, answers to the name of Bob! Well, you ain't found him, have you?'

Mrs. Moyse and her daughter were so tickled with the old man's mistake and Tom's increasing indignation that it was some time before their laughter would permit them to explain to uncle Keckwidge that it was a valuable paper, and not a dog, that was lost.

'Then why did he come a-telling us stories about tarrier-dogs? I don't believe there ain't been no dog lost at all, there now. And he may put that in his pipe, and smoke it.'

Tom was beginning to get really angry, but Bessie pacified him by squeezing his hand under the table, and whispering,

'Lor, you don't mind uncle, Tom dear. You know he's quite deaf and foolish. He doesn't know half he says.'

'I don't think much of the other half, whichever it may be,' said Tom doubtfully. 'He's never particularly amiable; but this evening he does seem to have his knife into me uncommon.'

'Never mind, dear,' replied Bessie; 'we don't take any notice of what he says, and you mustn't either. Have a little of mother's home-made raspberry jam, and think no more about it. This is the first pot of last year's making, brought out expressly in honour of you.'

'Thank you, ma'am, since you're so pressing, I don't mind if I do,' said Tom, and proceeded to help himself. But scarcely had he taken the first mouthful, when he grew suddenly pale, his lower jaw

dropped, and he remained gazing fixedly at the jam-pot, as if spell-bound.

'Good gracious, Tom!' said Bessie; 'whatever is the matter? Are you ill?'

'Don't say it's a blackbeetle,' said Mrs. Moyse, peering anxiously into the jam-pot. But there was nothing there to cause Tom's emotion.

'No, don't; it's nothing; I shall be all right directly!' gasped Tom. 'It's—it's—the five hundred pounds!'

Mrs. Moyse and Bessie looked at him as if he had taken leave of his senses. Uncle Keckwidge murmured incoherently, 'Five hundred tarrier-dogs with one eye, answers to the name of Bob;' and relapsed into vacancy.

But Tom did not long continue in his momentary condition of bewilderment. He pulled out the rough draft of the advertisement, which was still in his pocket, and began to compare the names of the parties to the deed, as there mentioned, with the piece of parchment which had covered the jam-pot, and which now lay upside down upon the table.

'Ralph Howard and Frederick Pollock. Thomas Burt and Sidney Forrest Dysart. William Henry Austin. Yes, the very names! Mrs. Moyse, I've found the missing deed, or at least a piece of it; and now, if we can trace the rest, our fortune's made!'

'You don't mean that dirty old piece of sheepskin that lay about here for ever so long, and that I took to cover my jam-pots! Good gracious!'

'Mrs. Moyse, that dirty old piece of parchment is worth five hundred pounds! But where's the rest of it? For heaven's sake, don't say it's destroyed!'

'It's all cut up, at any rate,' said Mrs. Moyse, flinging open her cupboard. 'There's two dozen

pots there, and they've each got a piece of it. That pot was the first we've opened. And I rather think'—rummaging in the cupboard—'yes, here it is!—I rather think this is all the rest of it.'

It was an anxious moment. The mutilated parchment was spread out, the pots uncovered, and the circular fragments restored, though with some difficulty, each to its proper place. At last the task was finished. A few of the *and whereases* and *provided alsos* were slightly sticky, but not the smallest part was missing.

Mrs. Moyse's possession of the deed was very easily accounted for. When Messrs. Sharpe & Floyd had removed from Chancery-lane, a quantity of old papers, which were regarded as out of date and useless, had been swept into a corner for the dustman. The deed in question had, by some accident, got among them; and Mrs. Moyse, observing that it was parchment, and being a careful housekeeper, picked it up and laid it aside for the purpose for which she afterwards used it.

These particulars were communicated to Tom while Bessie brushed his hat and generally got him ready (for excitement had made him quite helpless) to go off to Mr. Sharpe's private house at once to claim the reward. Everybody appeared to have a vague kind of impression that it was all a dream, and that they had better secure the reward before they woke up. With the deed carefully wrapped in paper and in the breast-pocket of his closely-buttoned coat, Tom hurried to Mr. Sharpe's, and, hot and panting, began to tell his story. No sooner, however, had Mr. Sharpe comprehended the main fact that the deed was found, and assured himself of its identity, than he stopped Tom short in his narrative.

'That'll do for the present,' said he; 'you shall tell me the rest as we go to Mr. Morpeth's.'

A hansom was called, and the pair were quickly at Mr. Morpeth's house.

'Is your master in?' inquired Mr. Sharpe.

'Yes, sir,' said the footman; 'but he is just sitting down to dinner.'

'I must see him, notwithstanding,' said Mr. Sharpe. 'Kindly take him my card; tell him my business is urgent.'

The man complied, and a moment later Mr. Morpeth threw open the dining-room door.

'Walk in, Mr. Sharpe. Ah, you have good news! I see it in your face! The deed is found!'

'Yes, sir; I am happy to say it is, and I congratulate you with all my heart; and you too, my dear Mrs. Morpeth,' addressing a fair-faced gentle-looking lady, who was seated at the head of the table.

'It is really found at last, is it?' said she. 'O, what a relief! Then there will be no need for me to appear in that dreadful court?'

'Not the slightest need; indeed, I may almost say that the finding of the deed puts an end to the suit. The plaintiffs haven't a leg to stand upon.'

'But where, when, how, was it found?' inquired Mr. Morpeth.

'Here is the fortunate finder. He had better tell his own story,' said Mr. Sharpe; 'for as soon as I realised that the deed was actually found, I brought him here at once, and I scarcely know the particulars myself.'

Tom told his story, and produced the deed, receiving the heartiest commendation for his intelligence and acuteness.

'Excuse me one moment,' said Mr. Morpeth; and leaving the room, he returned with a cheque, still wet, requesting Messrs. Coutts & Co. to pay to Mr. Thomas

Halliday or order the sum of *five hundred pounds*.

'And now, my friends,' he said, 'sit down and join us at dinner, which you have so agreeably interrupted. For my own part, I feel more inclined to enjoy my dinner than I have for a twelve-month past, though I'm afraid the soup has got cold. Sit down, Sharpe. Will you sit there, Mr. Halliday, and make yourself at home?'

Tom blushed and stammered. 'I thank you kindly, sir; but, if you remember, I've partaken of tea and shrimps already, sir. And if you'll kindly excuse me, I think there's some one might feel hurt; I mean—the truth is—my young lady is waiting for me, and—and I feel so proud and happy with this piece of paper that I sha'n't believe it's real until I've shown it to Bessie, God bless her!'

'Amen, my lad; and if you or she need a friend, you shall find one in me.'

'And in me too,' said Mrs. Morpeth. 'And tell your Bessie I shall come and make her acquaintance very soon.'

Tom and Bessie were married a few months later, Mr. and Mrs. Morpeth both insisting on being present at the ceremony. They had made a great pet of Bessie, and given substantial aid to the young couple in commencing housekeeping, quite apart from the five hundred pounds earned by Tom in connection with the missing deed. Uncle Keckwidge gave the bride away, and has gradually become quite reconciled to Tom, whom he regards as a man of unlimited wealth, acquired (such is still his firm conviction) by his having found and restored to its lawful owner a one-eyed terrier, answering to the name of Bob.

CLUB CAMEOS.

Social Ambition.

EVER since the days when Horace asked of Mæcenas how it came to pass that no one was satisfied with the position that the gods had placed him in, discontent has been the lot of humanity. What is a source of envy to one man is a source of disappointment to another. Here is a distinguished statesman, whose lofty wisdom has influenced the councils of Cabinets and guided the policy of the State; yet in his heart of hearts he would gladly sacrifice all his past reputation could he but gain a niche in the temple of fame as a great author. There is a gallant soldier, whose broad breast, covered with hardly-won decorations, bears witness to the brilliant services he has rendered his country; yet he is indifferent to the laurels won by his sword, and is only solicitous after those he is never likely to gain by his brush as an artist. A third sees the distance between himself and the woolsack lessening year after year; yet, careless of his name as a splendid lawyer, he aspires after the reputation of a Lovelace, and curses Nature, which has endowed him with brains, for neglecting to adorn his face. Were not Richelieu, Mazarin, Somers, Walpole, far prouder of their conquests in the boudoir than of their victories in the Senate? A fourth has raised himself to a leading position in the republic of letters; yet would he throw all his manuscripts to the wind to be considered a man of fashion. A fifth lends loans to empires, and by a word

of acceptance or refusal can influence the markets of the world; yet all his wealth is powerless to buy what he covets with cravings that can never be satisfied—the blue blood of ancient lineage. Around us we see soldiers who would they were divines, divines who would they were statesmen, lawyers who wish to be artists, philosophers who wish to be men of fashion, peers who would they were demagogues, republicans who would sell their souls for a coronet—men of war, men of science, men of industry, men of idleness—all dissatisfied with their position in life, and longing after the unattainable. The question put to the illustrious descendant of Tuscan kings is as applicable now as then. ‘How is it, Mæcenas,’ asks the genial pagan, ‘that no one lives content with his condition, whether Reason gave it him or Luck threw it in his way, but praises those who have different pursuits?’

Yet is this question only the echo of the cry of the bard-king who had drunk the chalice of life to the very dregs, and found the cup but vanity of vanities, all was vanity. In this best of all possible worlds no one is completely happy, no one is so thoroughly contented with his lot—however brilliant that lot may appear to the outsider—as not to hanker after what he has not. The barrister, up whose staircase solicitors never ascend, no doubt looks upon the illustrious occupier of the woolsack as the happiest and most fortunate of men; yet per-

haps his lordship is a martyr to dyspepsia or the gout, or his wife makes his home-life unbearable, or his eldest son goes to the bad, or there hangs over his head some scandal of the past which he is ever in terror of being made public, or there is some other decoction of the *amari aliquid* which mars the completeness of his enjoyment. However well furnished our houses and ornate their appointments, there exists a skeleton in every

cupboard; and not a tenant but fears, at some time or other, that either he or his guests will hear the rattling of its bones. Conscience makes cowards of us all. We know in what particular apartment of our mansion is suspended that attenuated spectre, and we dread lest it walk down-stairs and expose itself to our disgrace. Perhaps we give ourselves the airs of the choicest Lafitte or of '42 port; how, then, should we like

the skeleton to visit our cellar and show us up as *vin ordinaires* of the thinnest of vintages! Or it may be that we pretend to be as wealthy as our neighbour; how, then, should we approve of that lean monster quitting his retreat, and holding up our banker's book to the world, and revealing our miserable shifts and petty economies to make both ends meet? We say we are as brave as Agamemnon: should we care for the arm of the skeleton to strip the lion's skin from off our shoulders,

and expose us in our true asinine garb? We are religious, and looked up to by the neighbourhood; but have we no stories in the book of our life to which we would rather that that bony finger did not point? We are high born or well connected, and we pretend to intimate relations with certain in the *Peerage* or the *Landed Gentry*; can it, then, be desirable for our cupboard tenant to be let loose, and to disclose those little flaws in our genealogical tree which somewhat rudely disturb the

purity, or perhaps the legitimacy, of our descent? And so each one of us shuts up his peculiar skeleton, stows his bones effectively out of sight and smell, and tries to forget that so ghastly a visitor is in the family. But our precautions are in vain : close as we keep the secret of its prison, not a friend who calls upon us but is perfectly aware of the existence of our disagreeable lodger, and, blind to the fact that we know all about the anatomical remains in *his* closet, pities us accordingly. My good sir, if you wish to preserve anything from the public eye, expose it ; conceal it, and it will be criticised, inquired into, and disclosed before you are many hours older.

My friend, little Freddy West, has a secret which he fancies he cleverly conceals from us of the Caravanserai. He, too, is under the impression that his skeleton is most safely locked up, and that none of his friends have ever heard its bones rattle. The son of a most respectable City tea-merchant (everybody in Mincing-lane knows the firm, Leaf, West, Grounds, & Co.), who has made a large fortune, I am given to understand, out of his dealings with the Chinese in opium, and with the English in bohea, Freddy declines to have any connection with the paternal warehouse. The little impostor scorns trade and all its belongings, and, thanks to manufactured crest and manipulated arms, lays claim to belong to a distinguished Kentish family. When asked by the stranger, in all innocence, whether he is related to the noble house whose armorial bearings he has assumed, he replies quietly, 'Yes, but we are the younger branch ;' and drops the subject. In common with so many of his class, he 'double-barrels' his name. His mother, a Miss Farningham,

the daughter of a small country vicar, he was christened Frederick Farningham ; and consequently he has now blossomed forth as F. Farningham - West, leaving the uninitiated to imagine, by the adoption of the hyphen, that in his veins is not only the blood of the Wests, but that he will succeed to some of the family property. It has much amused me, when the waiter has written Freddy's name on a bit of paper, and placed it on the table which that young gentleman wishes to secure for dinner, to hear one of the enlightened of the club, on ascertaining who is to be his prandial neighbour, remark, 'O yes, he is one of the Delawarr lot, you know ; his father, a younger son, married a Sackville West, had a pot of money with her, and took the name. That young fellow is the heir to a rattling good fortune.' Of such is the accuracy of the world.

Whatever may be the wealth of West *père*, very little of its golden stream will flow into the pockets of the son. Educated at Harrow and afterwards at Oriel, Freddy, after having obtained his degree, declined to sit on a three-legged stool, to pore over ledgers or to look after customers. In an age which sees the sons of some of the first families in the country covet partnerships in good mercantile houses, young West, whose social instincts were strong, felt that he had a soul above commerce, and pined after a prominent position in what his father called 'the West-end.' As he added up the books, examined dock-warrants, or watched the expectorations of the tea-taster, visions of intimacies with men of fashion, of flirtations with high-born dames, of the portals of society opened *à deux battants* before him, revealing all the pleasures and hospitalities of a graceful and refined civilisation,

conjured themselves up before his envious gaze. He wanted to be a 'swell' and to belong to the order. He had nothing in common with business and its surroundings. He hated the loud noisy men, who came into the office with their hats on the side of their heads, who slapped him vigorously on the back and wanted 'to know if

the governor was in.' Careful and fastidious in his dress, he objected to run about the lanes and alleys of the City on mercantile errands, like a bank-clerk. The partners did not come up to his standard of what gentlemen should be; he declined to laugh at their stories whilst he corrected their grammar. His airs and graces so

grievously offended many of the firm's best clients that they went away in anger and took their custom to a rival.

Nor did Freddy attend to the work intrusted to him. He came late and went away early. He read the newspapers instead of the letters. He preferred to lunch at the Caravanserai to the cook-shops patronised by the other partners. He was far more eager

to obtain invitations to dance or dinner than to beat up for customers. In short, he was worse than useless in the firm, and his father had no alternative but to turn him out. Freddy, intent upon exploring the realms of society, had long quitted the paternal villa at Dulwich, and between son and sire there was little love lost. Accordingly the young man found himself the possessor

of the interest on 10,000*l.*, strictly tied up, and with not a hope of obtaining a farthing beyond. His second brother, who had been educated at a City school, and who was perfectly content with suburban life, was taken into partnership, and doubtless will one day develop into a merchant-prince.

Idle, independent, ambitious, Freddy strained all his efforts to get into good society. It was uphill work, and he made little progress. A young man, against whom there is nothing notorious, has several ways at the present day of entering society, should his kith and kin be unable to command the ordinary mode of ingress. A good tenor voice will open the doors of houses which otherwise would be closed. A marked capacity for private theatricals is in itself an introduction to the highest. An amusing talker will generally end by finding his legs under the mahogany in most desirable dining-rooms. Music, comic songs, a talent for getting up cotillons, mimicry, ventriloquism, conjuring, are all means to an end. I know one man who was asked out a good deal simply and solely because he had a name as being a clever designer of monograms, in the days when monograms were the rage. Where he dined he had to design ; as another man, where he dines, has to sing, play, amuse, or talk. Society conducts its hospitalities on a very commercial basis. You are welcome because you are noble, illustrious, famous, or wealthy, and thus by your presence reflect credit on your host and hostess. If you are none of these things you are invited because you take the place of the professional singer, musician, or entertainer. There is no obligation on either side. You get your dinners out of society, and society gets its equivalent out of you. But to

the man who has no equivalent to offer, society is the coldest of hosts. And this was the case with Freddy. He had enough to live on with economy, but nothing more. In spite of his sham pedigree the secret of his origin was known to all. He was not musical, he had no voice, he was a bad waltzer, he was not particularly amusing, he could not act, he had no special gifts likely to bear him on their tide to social success. Season after season passes, and he finds himself no nearer to the goal of his ambition than when he started. Yet he employs all the devices of the unadmitted. He knows a good many men, but they do not take him to their houses. He hunted one winter at Melton, and he took a share in a yacht one summer at Cowes ; but neither of these moves led to anything. He travels a good deal ; but the English he knows abroad drop him when they cross the Channel. He has taken an active part in politics ; but though the members whose elections he has been instrumental in obtaining gladly ask him to meet their constituents at a club-dinner, and seek his coöperation on platforms at meetings, these are not exactly the rewards he desires. He has essayed the religious line, in the hope that when in the one world he might scale the boundary-wall and find his way into the other. Yet in vain. He has interested himself in parish-work under the auspices of a fashionable London vicar ; he has taught in schools ; he has visited the poor ; he has asked the curates to dinner ; he has subscribed to causes he does not care about, and to missions he never before heard of : but all his energy and hypocrisy have been useless. He was invited to a *conversazione* and a drawing-room meeting or two, but he made no acquaintances. The vicar and the fashionable

district-visitors were charmed to meet him on parochial matters, and to give him a long list of the poor he was to visit ; but they did not consider that an interest in alleviating surrounding distress, however admirable and praiseworthy such feelings might be, necessarily led to social intimacy. 'That game is no go,' said Master Freddy to himself; 'damme, I don't want to know the poor—I want to know the rich.' To us who were somewhat behind the scenes this episode in our little friend's life was very amusing.

Thus it has happened that the aims Freddy set before him have never been realised. He is still, though on the verge of thirty, to use a favourite word of his, an 'outsider.' In his modest lodgings in Duke-street no invitations arrive of the nature he desires; no well-appointed carriage, with its fair well-dressed occupants, calls for him at the club to take him out for a drive; when he takes his walks abroad it is seldom that he has occasion to lift his hat and make his bow. He hovers between two social spheres, and belongs to neither. He is not of the great world, and he is not of the commercial world. Holding in horror trade, and clinging with such tenacity to the Farningham-West imposition that he ends by almost believing it, he has completely severed himself from his father's friends and relations. On the few occasions when he has put in an appearance at the parental table, he has become livid with suppressed rage at the boorish fashion in which his sire partakes of the dishes he loves, at the vulgar caps and colours his mother wears, at the English spoken by his brothers, and at the want of breeding of his sisters. It is not a happy gathering. The family look upon Freddy as 'a swell,'

and stand in awe of him; whilst West père, hot with drink and sulky, glares at his first-born as if he would like, but dare not, to kick him into the road.

Yet in the whole realms of Pall Mall there is not a more miserable little creature than Freddy. Thanks to his tailor and hatter, a neat figure and an agreeable appearance, he looks like a gentleman; but in his views and sentiments he has little in common with the name. To rank he is prepared to pardon every shortcoming; and so long as men and women are born in the purple, he extenuates every fault and vice they commit. He worships birth and all the surroundings of fashion as only one of the middle class, who is ashamed of the order to which he belongs, can worship them. 'Blood' is to him all what religion is, all what principle is, all what honour, truth, morality are to other men. He does not respect rank as it is only right that it should in this country be respected, but he regards it with the most slavish adulation. If the son of a peer is a knave, or the daughter of a peer hideous, he will find the one honourable and the other a beauty. He detests every class but the one to which he does not belong, and into which he cannot gain admittance. He is indifferent to anything for its own sake; but if an undertaking be encouraged by the peerage, he likes to see his name amongst those who have given a guinea. He is the best of men to visit a fancy bazaar, for a duchess or a countess can wheedle him out of half of his monthly allowance. He seldom plays whist; but when he finds that any 'swells' are in the card-room of the Caravan-serai, he will cut in and be proud to lose his money in such good company. On the slightest en-

couragement he will strike up an acquaintance with men of fashion, and economise for a fortnight to ask them to a dinner, which they never return. Though not in the world, he takes great pains to appear to be of it. He studies all the fashionable newspapers, and makes himself familiar with the movements of those in society.

He knows what receptions are to be held, and what balls and dinners are to be given, during the week. He has learnt his Burke almost by heart, and makes it his business to be familiar with the marriages that are to take place during the season. He knows by sight all the great people in town, and is a very useful man to escort country

cousins to the Opera or the Park. Such people imagine him to be a buck of the first water, for he points out to them the beauties amongst the women and the distinguished amongst the men; and freely, when in their company, takes off his hat to carriages as they drive past, but whose occupants, a keen observer will notice, decline to return the salutation. He casually inquires of these rus-

tics whether they are going to Lady Daah's dance to-night, or to the Duchess of Blank's reception to-morrow; and when they modestly say, 'O dear no; we know no one in London!' he manages to convey the impression to their minds that he of course is amongst the invited.

As he is only happy in the society of those who, as it were, bolster up his social position, he

is the most abject of toadies. If one of the few really great men who belong to the Caravanseraï enters the club, Freddy will follow him about with his eyes, examine his dress, and watch how he eats, sits down, or reads the newspaper. When the young men of fashion, who belong to that world whose joys he so fiercely covets, hang about the hall in groups before driving out to the houses to which they are invited, he hovers near them and listens to their conversation. How he admires those 'swells,' who talk quite simply and naturally of the great people they know, nor seem to be much impressed by the favours accorded to them ! I verily believe, if Mephistopheles would come up and offer Freddy a peerage, and all the advantages attached to it, he would have no difficulty in coming to terms about my little friend's soul. Aware that he is not what he wishes to be and what he pretends to be (it is amusing how jealously he keeps the secret of his commercial origin, and how patent that secret is to all of us !), young West is utterly deficient in self-respect, and in the higher qualities of true manhood. In his heart he feels himself, to use a term of reproach he is rather fond of casting at others, a 'snob ;' and as long as he holds the mean views of life he entertains, even were he the son of a duke, he richly deserves the name. Freddy is a snob. He has the tricks of imposition of the snob, the servile admiration of the snob, that mixture of deference for the great and contempt for the lowly only to be found in the snob, and he suffers the needless mental tortures of the snob.

When I see Freddy and listen to his conversation, I cannot help moralising on man's discontent. Here is a young fellow born to what many would envy. He en-

tered upon life under most favourable auspices. For him the anxiety and struggle which fall to the lot of the man who has to make a career did not exist. The family business was already founded ; he had only to follow in his father's footsteps to be a wealthy man. He had a home (it might, perhaps, be in better taste, but one cannot have everything) such as only money could furnish and keep up. His family doted upon him until his contemptible affectation alienated them from him. He could have had troops of friends to cheer and amuse him. He could have led a happy, manly, and contented life. He had nothing to be ashamed of. His father was an upright honest man, whose good name had never been tarnished by sharp practice or fraudulent proceedings. It was true that he was in trade ; and pray, Master Freddy, who is not in trade in these days ? The father may have just reason to be ashamed of the son, but certainly not the son of the sire.

Yet Freddy has sacrificed all these advantages for the emptiest of ambitions ; he has lost everything and gained nothing. He is nobody. He never will have more than some eight hundred a year. He would like to marry, but he refuses to marry into his father's set, and he has little chance of marrying outside it. He has no friends but those who ridicule him for his failings. His life is passed in sham, hypocrisy, and unhappiness. *Cui bono ?* Even from his own point of view he has played his cards badly. Had he humoured his father and been diligent in business there was nothing to prevent him, good-looking and well-mannered, and with Fortune at his back, from working his way, as many have before him, into the society he so warmly admires. As

a member of the great Plutocracy he would have had no occasion to go forth into the highways and byways to find 'friends;' nor, when once the extent of his means was ascertained, need he have despaired of making a bril-

liant alliance. He had a future before him which might have been brilliant, but which certainly would have been comfortable. The future that now stares him in the face is a blank; for let Freddy wish as much as he may,

the portals of the paternal firm are shut against him. Nor will it be long, from what I hear, before the doors of the Dulwich villa will follow the example of the warehouse at Mincing-lane. If ever man gave up the substance to

grasp the shadow, it is F. Farningham-West; and there must be times, I fancy, when he and his skeleton pass many a *mauvais quart d'heure* together. I should not care to be present at those interviews.

THE INTERNAL ECONOMY OF HER MAJESTY'S SHIPS.

BY A NAVAL OFFICER.

THE varied duties which her Majesty's ships are obliged to perform, and the requirements of the modern service, make the internal economy of a man-of-war an art in itself, not always successfully carried out because so many new things are added from modern requirements, and, like everything else in the country, life in the royal navy is life at high pressure.

A generation back the arrangements of a man-of-war were of a simple nature: the drilling was not frequent; when it did take place it was more *general* than *particular*, everybody taking part in it; when once the arrangements of the ship were settled, there was nothing more to be done but keep her clean and perform such work as fell to her lot, and she was in consequence, in her time, perfect. But nowadays so much is undertaken, so many things are attempted, few ships are quite successful; and though we believe every one tries to do his best, we think his best is much better than it has any right to be, and it has always been a wonder to us that a general failure to reach what is required is not more startling than it is, and we have wondered, over and over again, at ships being in as good order as we have seen them, and quite understand how those who have had them in charge are content if they can reach a certain modicum of success. But if our readers will follow us through the

weekly and daily life in our ships—that which goes on irrespective of where the ship may be, whether abroad or at home, at sea or in harbour—we think it will be clear to them far too much is undertaken, and therefore nothing is ever completely and thoroughly carried out. We desire to see a man-of-war cleared of much work that can better be done elsewhere, so that the ship might be perfected in such things as can only be done there. These are quite enough in themselves, if done thoroughly; and we believe whatever can be fully prepared for its work in a ship before being sent on board ought to be so prepared: even then every one has his work cut out for him to make the ship fit to take her place in the royal fleet of Great Britain.

The manners and customs of a man-of-war are very peculiar; the royal navy goes back to the days of Henry VIII., and there are now probably many customs that come direct from those times with but slight modifications. Our royal navy still retains more of the past in its inner life than people at all imagine, and yet we doubt if any service has so completely changed as it has done during the present generation. It has changed in ships, officers, and men; in thoughts, feelings, and the performance of its duties: yet there is a vein of the old service—that service on which the whole nation can look back with pride—running

through all, as the single thread of coloured worsted runs through the whole length of every rope in the ships.

'Man-of-war fashion' is a tradition that is always kept sight of in everything that is done, in distinction to the fashion of merchant ships, in which ships, as there are few men, the work is done bit by bit; but royal ships, having plenty of men, always try to make such arrangements that everything, no matter what, is done with rapidity, in perfect silence, and as many things as possible done at the same time, every man having some part of the work assigned to him specially. This feature is brought to bear directly on keeping the ship in fighting order, which means that she is always in fit condition for fighting at any hour of the day or night.

The accustoming a ship's company to work together, so that the full strain of the labour falls on all alike, and the full benefit of each man's strength is obtained, no matter what has to be done, is the great aim; and for this constant teaching is required—each man must be taught first separately, and then with others in small parties. A man-of-war in these days is a big school; teachers and taught are ever at work; and with the number of items that have to be learnt, if a man gets one lesson a week in all the subjects on which he should be perfect, he does very well.

Men-of-war are generally prepared as to their rigging, and many essentials, at the different dockyards; the guns and all stores that will not deteriorate are placed on board; the ship is cleaned and painted, so that when officers are appointed, and the bluejackets and marines drafted, they can go direct on board, and commence their life there at once. In olden

times, the bare hull was given, and the officers and crew had to fit out that hull, rigging the masts and placing everything on board. This had its advantages, for those belonging to ships then had seen them grow, as it were, under their hands, and started with an affection for their handiwork; it was also a good rigging-lesson for every one concerned; but it took three months or so before the ship was fit for sea, the crew being obtained by ones and twos daily. Now, however, that our men serve continuously, they come on board in a body, and in these days we cannot afford to lose so much time, but want our ships to be ready as soon as they are 'in commission'—that is, having an officer in command, who holds a commission from the Lords of the Admiralty.

Officers and men join the ships for which they have been detailed, and are placed as they come on the ships' books—all the officers in a list by themselves, the bluejackets in one and marines in another—every one having a number, which is retained while belonging to the ship, and is for the purposes of accounts, pay, charges, &c.

The officers come from all parts of the country: the seniors from their homes, where they have been living on half-pay; the juniors from the various ships in which they have been serving. The marines are sent in a body from their head-quarters; the trained seamen gunners come from the gunnery establishments; the stokers and artisans from the steam reserve at the port; the bluejackets proper from the port-admiral's ship; the boys from a training-ship; the servants, cooks, and bandsmen are entered individually, in their case undergoing a medical examination; and in a few days the ship,

as far as her crew goes, is practically complete.

The basis of the internal organisation of a man-of-war is a book called the *watch-bill*, and as the men join they are seen and given numbers in this watch-bill, which is also the number of their hammock and, sometimes, their bag. The officer next in seniority to the captain arranges this book; in an ironclad he is the commander, in a smaller vessel the senior or first lieutenant. The watch-bill having been prepared in skeleton, with the stations aloft and different boats placed against the numbers, each man is asked some question, looked at, and straightway fixed in a 'part of the ship.' If, relatively compared with others, he is oldish, he is made a fore-castle-man or quarter-deck-man, stationed on the fore- or main-yard, and put on a launch or pinnace; if relatively middle-aged, he is made a fore- or maintop-man, placed on a topsail-yard, put in either of the above-named boats, or one of the cutters or the captain's galley; if a very smart active-looking man, as a fore- or maintop-man, he is placed on a topgallant-yard, and in no boat at all. The lads are placed in the mizentop or on the royal yards belonging to the other tops, in the cutters or the gigs, that part of the ship and those boats having fewer able seamen, whereas the other parts have comparatively fewer ordinary seamen; the boys are divided over all the parts, and placed in the smallest gig and dingy. The boats' crews are taken from all parts, so that when they are away from the ship the loss of strength is relative and felt equally. Everything in a man-of-war being done by manual labour, this cannot be lost sight of: no one part of the ship should ever be specially drained of its strength for other labour. The marines,

stokers, carpenters, day-men, and band are left together on the watch-bill. Every man in the ship has a number there, the numbers being consecutive, the odd ones belonging to the *starboard watch*, and the even numbers to the *port watch*, the bluejackets wearing a mark on their shoulders, of red braid on their blue frocks, and blue braid on their white frocks, according to their watches. The men of the starboard watch wear this on their *right* shoulder, the men of the port watch on their *left*; the starboard watch always going to the starboard, or right side of the yards, in a boat pulling a starboard or right-side oar; the port watch, in the same way, taking the left side in all they have to do. The 'parts of the ship' are divided into watches, and each watch is split in half, called the first and second halves of the watch; so that in a minor way the watch represents 'all hands,' the men of the odd-numbered half in their watch keeping to the starboard side, and the men of the even-numbered half to the port side. In small ships there are no halves; and, again, in large ships the halves are divided into subdivisions, the first and second subdivisions being in the first half, and the third and fourth in the second half. In this way each part of the ship has men belonging to it of both watches, and in each watch two halves, and in those halves four subdivisions; then every yard has men stationed on it, equally taken from the different halves of the part of the ship in whose charge it is. Every boat, in like manner, has an equal number of men from each watch, but drawn from the different parts of the ship; and in all these arrangements the opposite numbers, such as 25 and 26, 73 and 74, 191 and 192, each in his own watch, has

similar duties, or, if stationed in a boat, will belong to one boat pulling on the same thwart.

A ship's company sleeps, according to its numbers on the watch-bill, from right to left, commencing right forward, the numbers going across the deck in consecutive tiers; the exceptions to this being that the boatswain's mates and the captains of the parts of the ship sleep next to the hatchways, ready to be up in their places quickly. The guard sleep together; the bugler, with his drum and bugle, sleeps close to a sentry; the boys are placed together where there is a sentry. If there is room to be found, such men as are under punishment also sleep together; and, in harbour, the duty-boat's crew always sleep in the same place, with these exceptions—31, 32, 33, and 34, &c., are in a row, that, when 31 and 33 are in the watch on deck, 32 and 34 have more room to sleep in their watch below. As many men as possible are placed in the decks where there is most air, and every available space is taken advantage of; but from 14 to 18 inches is often all that can be allowed each man, and, with every one turned into his hammock, in many places there is a tight pack. It is obvious the numbers must go across the deck; otherwise, if the starboard watch slept the starboard side, and the port watch the port side, the ship would always at night, at sea, have a dead weight one side or the other, to say nothing of this arrangement being better for the sleepers.

The watch-bill being complete, the messes have to be arranged. This is done by the master-at-arms. The men select their messes, but he sees every mess has an equal number belonging to it of each watch, and in each

watch equal numbers of either half, and also that the day-men, &c., are fairly distributed over all the messes. The reason of this is to prevent any great preponderance of one part of the ship, watch, or half of a watch in any mess, that the work of cleaning the place in which they live may press on each man equally.

The men being divided into their parts of the ship, watches, &c., and messed, the stationing at the guns comes next, called the *quarter-bill*. For this purpose, the lieutenant who is specially appointed for gunnery duties sees all the men, and, starting with the seamen gunners, places them as captains and second captains of the guns, putting such of them as are petty officers in these positions first, the remainder taking the most important numbers at the guns. The guns' crews are then filled up according to the men's abilities, as far as can be ascertained, the trained men following the seamen gunners as to places. A proportion of the marines are put to each gun; the marine artillery are placed at one or two guns, under their own officers; and the midshipmen, sub-lieutenants, and lieutenants are detailed to the various batteries, according to their seniority, and the value of the fighting power of the battery. These stations at quarters of the officers give them the men composing the guns' crews as the men of their *divisions*, whose clothes and personal appearance they are responsible for, the lieutenant in charge being always referred to respecting his men, their conduct, and abilities. The men are kept to their watches in the quarter-bill, all the starboard guns having crews belonging to the starboard watch, and the port guns crews of the port-watch; but each gun's crew is composed of men from

different parts of the ship, the men's qualifications within these limits being the guide to their station. The gunner's mates under the gunner are put in charge of the magazine- and shell-rooms. Here the day-men are stationed, and also to pass the powder to the powder-men belonging to the guns. A full allowance of stokers is given to the chief-engineer to keep up full steam, and attend to the various auxiliary engines. A strong and useful fire-brigade is selected for the lower parts of the ship, composed of artisans and stokers, with a boatswain's mate, under the charge of a lieutenant and other officers. The best marksmen are selected to go up into the tops with their rifles, as 'top-riflemen' and 'gatling-guns' crew.' A party of seamen is given to the boatswain, called 'riggers,' who are to do their best in replacing what rigging may be shot away in action, or in cutting it away, as may be wanted. Men are stationed to the 'helm' and 'lead,' under the navigating officer; to look out for 'signals;' to carry the wounded below, and to assist the surgeons. There are also arrangements to be made for letting the men know in the magazines what powder is required, what shells have to be fitted, for the firing of the broadsides by electricity, and converging all guns on one spot, and also for the working of torpedoes.

The *fire-bill* is the next point arranged, in case of fire breaking out at any time, and much care and thought are required so as to get at, and use with best effects, all the different pumps with which a ship is supplied, to see that the fire can be localised, all draughts being shut off by the closing of the compartment doors, ventilators, and hatchways, and also that the boats can be got into the water with the utmost rapidity;

for it must be remembered that the largest boats are carried inside the ship, weigh from three to four tons, and are placed one within the other; to get these in the water they have to be hoisted out, entailing some preparation and the use of special tackles. In fire-stations, a watch, the one 'on deck,' as that which is ready, with all the day-men, is generally taken to get 'out boats,' and the 'watch below' is identified in its parts of the ship with the different pumps. A party of the best and oldest seamen and the shipwrights are selected in each watch to form the 'fire party,' under the charge of the third senior officer in the ship; these men have to point the hoses and work at the fire, the rest of their watch manning the pumps. The guard of marines is given ball-cartridges, and placed as armed sentries round the ship, to prevent any person attempting to leave the ship, or put a boat in the water without orders; an extra guard, under a non-commissioned officer, is placed over the spirit-room, the keys of which are placed in the hands of the navigating officer; the stewards muster with the keys of their storerooms; the gunner with his mates, under a lieutenant, prepares for flooding the magazines, every ship having an arrangement for so doing; the carpenter sees the sea-cocks all turned, so as to get a supply of water, and places the caulker to sound the well, that it may be known exactly what water there is in the ship; and the chief-engineer, with stokers and engineer officers, attends to the steam-pumps.

The watch-bill, messing, the quarter-bill, and fire-bill have to be made the moment a ship is put in commission, and with this groundwork laid the work of preparation goes on: the perishable

stores are taken in, the provisions for so many months, the arms got on board, and lastly, when out of the harbour, powder, shot, and shell, and the ship is ready for sea. In the mean time the officers are arranging their messes, the various private stocks of provisions and wines are also coming on board, cabins are being fitted up, and each chief of a department is seeing that everything wanted for it is obtained. The gunnery lieutenant during this time is settling the serving out of the arms, selecting the boarders from the different batteries, and also the landing parties; besides this, seeing to the arrangements for sending the boats away on torpedo service, or fully manned and armed. The boarders are certain numbers from the guns' crews, each battery supplying a division. The landing parties are composed of the small-arm companies, field-piece crews, pioneers, stretcher parties, ammunition guard, and men to take charge of the boats that may be left on the beach as a base of operations; all sorts make up the parties, the bluejackets proper, with the seamen gunners as petty officers, form the companies, with lieutenants, sub-lieutenants, and midshipmen in charge; the artisans are the pioneers; stokers carry the stretchers, the ammunition guard being formed by the lads; and the boats taken care of by the bowmen and a few of the coxswains under a sub-lieutenant.

For torpedo service and the 'manning and arming boats,' care has to be taken to arrange the gear for each boat so that it can be readily found and put in her; for it must be remembered that besides the ordinary crew with their arms the large boats carry a nine-pounder gun with men to work it, a proportion of marines

as riflemen, a carpenter, armourer, and signalman; that every boat, to the smallest, has some marines; also carrying ammunition and provisions, according to the service—for exercise, the full allowance of ammunition, but regarding provisions, only biscuit and water; that all this gear has to be put in the boats quickly, and must therefore be kept in a particular place, and marked in such a way that each boat receives only what belongs to it.

The commander or first lieutenant, as the case may be, has also to settle what 'parts of the ship' are to have charge of the decks and different places about the ship; for in a man-of-war the same men are always taken again and again to do the same work, and always clean the same parts of the different decks day after day; that is to say, the mizentop-men always stow the bread-room; the marines the slop-room; the maintop-men the main and the foretop-men the fore holds; the forecastle-men and quarter-deck-men taking the tiers. And in cleaning the same principle occurs: the forecastle-men and foretop-men take what is in the fore part; the main- and mizentop-men what is aft; the quarter-deck-men and marines having their places; so that after a time the men are accustomed to the place, like to see their work well done, and each time do it better and quicker. Officers are also given charge of the different decks, to which they have to attend all day, but keeping no watch. It is also arranged what days the different halves of the watches are to be specially ready for duty, or, properly speaking, called for duty when the number of men required is so few they will suffice. For this the first halves take the odd days, and the second halves the even days of the month, the four sub-

divisions taking their day in turn. One day it is the first half and the first or second subdivision as the duty half and sub.; the next day it is the second half and the third or fourth subdivision. The cutters take week and week about as duty-boat, during their week of duty the crew being excused watch-keeping. Lastly, the stationing of the men for all work with the masts, yards, and sails has to be made; getting up the masts, crossing the upper yards, bending the sails, getting up the anchor, setting all sail, working ship at sea, reefing, taking in or shifting any sail, either a lot of them together with 'all hands,' or one sail only with the 'watch;' shifting yards, taking in all sail and coming to an anchor, getting the boats in and out, getting out anchors and cables either for the ship itself or for another in distress, and the preparing for action. Much thought and a good turn for arrangement are required; even then some time passes before all these things go smoothly, and from the beginning of a ship's commission to the end they have continually and repeatedly to be gone through, otherwise by falling into disuse nothing goes right when wanted. The work aloft, when done smartly and well, bears directly on a ship's fighting powers, as it enables her under whatever circumstances to be most quickly ready for action.

Before a ship first goes to sea the different parts of the ship have to be given their look-out posts by day and night, the lifeboats' crews settled—the boats, the cutters that hang outside the ship on each side being prepared for the work, and so fitted they can be got away from the ship, day or night, at a moment's warning. At sea these boats always have in them biscuit and water enough for fourteen men for about three days, which

might be made to last six or seven. They have a rifle and cartridges, slow match, a long light, lantern, and candles, so that should the boat lose the ship—a thing easily done at night—she may be self-supporting for a time, and have the means of attracting attention. The lifeboats' crews in their watch at sea are not allowed to go aloft.

To carry out all these points constant teaching, as we have said, is necessary: exercise aloft must go on; boat-work cannot be dispensed with; the guns' crews must be practised at their guns to enable them to take aim and fire in a ship at sea; all the machinery for electric-firing, lights, and torpedoes has to be exercised to be kept in working order and fit for use; the small-arm companies have to be taught their company-drill, and the battalion should land on convenient occasions; the field-guns' crews have to be taught their drill, to be ready to land with their guns; sword-drill should be learnt by all the bluejackets. So few men in a ship, under present circumstances, are perfect in all points, and so many changes take place amongst officers and men, that the classes under instruction never end. In the first point alone—exercise aloft—every one in the ship, except the excused day-men, takes part; and it can never be brought to too great a pitch of perfection, in our opinion, because it develops qualities which will help in all other points. The boat-work also is invaluable; boats' crews can never know too much of their work; it is work that brings out the genius of a sailor, and must be always taught. In the other points there is a standard which can be, and is, reached in the gunnery establishments, but is in only rare instances reached in a ship while belonging to a squadron or on a station, and, we believe,

never by every one in that ship. Some of the men may reach it—more or fewer, according to the personal interest the captain takes in the matter ; but as the standard is reached something else is given up ; and in spite of constant classes of instruction, which last the whole commission without cessation, very little ground is made practically ; and if our readers will follow us through the weekly and daily routine of a man-of-war, we think we shall be able to show this, and that it is desirable to eliminate some of the teaching from the ships on service, and to let that teaching, necessary as it is, take place under different circumstances.

The daily and weekly routine of men-of-war, whether ironclad, wooden, or composite ships, goes on pretty much the same all over the world, though in hot climates modifications take place ; some exercises have to be omitted, because of the sun, or take place during the cool morning or evening hours. We shall relate what is normal, and we will select a temperate climate. First, we will show the daily routine, the main points of which are always considered, and go on at sea or in harbour, fair weather or foul, and to which all other work is made to fit. We will then show the weekly routine of drills and general arrangements, which, it must be remembered, are subordinate ; that it must be given up at sea for the necessary work of the ship in proceeding on her way, and in harbour for such things as coaling, refitting, taking in stores and provisions, causing at sea whole forenoons and afternoons to pass without any drill or instruction, and in harbour two or three days on arrival, and at times a week or so. But, when possible, the time in a man-of-war is spent as follows :

DAILY ROUTINE.

- A.M.**
 4.30 Watch scrub and wash decks.
 6. 0 Lash up and stow hammocks.
 6.15 Bugle for cooks. Up guard and steerage hammocks.
 6.30 Breakfast.
 7. 0 Quarters ; clean guns.
 7.25 Secure guns.
 7.30 Disperse. Watch fall in, clean the wood and bright work ; watch below clean the mess-decks.
 7.45 Upper yardmen fall in ; officers' call.
 8. 0 Evolutions ; colours to be hoisted.
 8.15 Watch below clean the wood and bright work.
 8.30 Hands to dress.
 8.45 Stow bags ; clear the mess-decks ; cooks of messes clear up the mess-decks.
 9. 0 Divisions ; prayers ; stations ; forenoon drills.
 11. 0 Up spirits.
 11.30 Clear up decks.
 11.45 Bugle for cooks.
 12. 0 Dinner.
P.M.
 12.30 Issue grog.
 1.10 Out pipes.
 1.15 Quarters ; clean guns ; cooks of messes clear up the mess-decks. Disperse ; watch fall in ; afternoon drills.
 4. 0 Watch fall in ; clear up decks.
 4.15 Bugle for cooks.
 4.30 Supper ; shift into night-clothing.
 5. 0 Out pipes ; cooks of messes clear up the mess-decks ; clean arms.
 5.10 Inspection ; evolution ; coil up ropes ; up boats.
 7.15 Down guard and steerage hammocks.
 7.25 Petty officers for their lights.
 7.30 Stand by hammocks.
 8.30 Stow bags.
 8.45 Out pipes and lights ; cooks of messes clear up the mess-decks.
 9. 0 Rounds.
 9.30 Pipe down.
 10. 0 Out junior officers' lights.
 11. 0 Out wardroom officers' lights.

EVOLUTION ROUTINE.

Monday.

8. 0 Cross royal yards.
 5.20 Down royal yards.

Tuesday.

8. 0 Cross royal yards.
 5.20 Down topgallant masts.

Wednesday.

8. 0 Up topgallant masts, and cross topgallant and royal yards.
 5.20 Down topgallant and royal yards.

Thursday.

8. 0 Cross topgallant and royal yards.
 5.20 Down topgallant and royal yards.

Friday.

8. 0 Cross topgallant and royal yards and loose sails.

11. 0 Furl sails.
5.20 Down royal yards.
Saturday.
5.20 Mend the furl of sails.

There is no evolution on Sunday. Should sails be wet they are loosed at 8 o'clock, and if dry furled at 11, or after dinner, or at 5.20. On Wednesday night, in newly-commissioned ships, top-gallant masts are sent down as well as on Tuesday, and on Thursday morning sent up again.

WEEKLY ROUTINE.

Monday.

- A.M. General exercise aloft.
P.M. Rifle exercise.
6.0 Scrub and wash clothes.

Tuesday.

- A.M. 4.0 Scrub hammocks on alternate weeks.
A division at gun-drill.
P.M. Boat exercise; rifle-exercise.

Wednesday.

- A.M. Field-gun exercise; marines at drill.
P.M. Sword-exercise; midshipmen and boys at gun, rifle, or sword exercise.

Thursday.

- A.M. Landing parties at drill; magazine-exercise.
P.M. Make and mend clothes.
6.0 Scrub and wash clothes.

Friday.

- A.M. Exercise at general quarters.
P.M. Boat-exercise; scrape masts and booms.

Saturday.

Clean ship, boats, guns, &c.

GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS.

Monday. At sea there is no exercise aloft in the forenoon, but a division at gun-exercise instead; this is also the case in harbour whenever 'drill aloft' does not take place. Once a month, after 'drill,' the hammock gautlines are rove, the men's blankets fastened to them, triced up, and the bedding aired; hammocks being lashed up and stowed again after dinner.

Tuesday. On alternate weeks hammocks are scrubbed and hung up to dry; every week clothes are hung up to dry. Stations are

read after divisions, and the evolutions practised in dumb-show. In the afternoon the boat-exercise takes the form of sailing; in a squadron, the steamboats are manœuvred as a miniature fleet.

Wednesday. Stations are read, and the evolutions acted after divisions. In harbour, when practicable, the field-guns' crews are landed; in a squadron, they will be formed in batteries and drilled together.

Thursday is a mustering day; twice a month the men are mustered as they stand on the ship's books. The first Thursday in every alternate month, the bedding is inspected; the last in every three months there is a general inspection of clothes. Once a quarter the Articles of War are read. On this day any orders, circulars, &c., promulgated for general information are read. Every Thursday the officers of divisions inspect a few men's clothes, taking care each man's clothes have been seen at least once a quarter. All men who are to be advanced are seen by the captain on the last Thursday of each month, and every Thursday *requests* are made. In the afternoon nothing is done; smoking is allowed to 4 P.M.; the day, in consequence, being known as 'rope-yarn Sunday.'

Friday. General quarters commence at 9.30 and last one hour. Washed-clothes are up to dry. In the afternoon the boat-exercise will be either 'manning and arming,' or 'laying out anchors.' The last Friday evening in the month the fire-stations are exercised.

Saturday. The last Saturday in the month, while the decks are wet, all pumps are tried.

Sunday. As few decks as possible are cleaned. Divisions are at 9.30, the ship and men are inspected by the captain, after which

there is divine service ; then nothing is done until after supper, when there are prayers, and sometimes a voluntary evening service. After prayers ropes are coiled up, and boats hoisted as usual.

At sea the routine is just the same, except that supper will be a quarter of an hour earlier, and immediately after 'inspection' there is drill aloft, for at least an hour, except on Sunday. In squadrons, during week-days, there is often half an hour's drill aloft at 11 A.M. and 3 P.M., by which time the forenoon and afternoon gunnery-drills are generally over. Every afternoon, except Sunday, Thursday, and Saturday, at sea or in harbour, some of the younger seamen are exercised aloft, or taught seamanship by a petty officer ; on Monday afternoon, the midshipmen are exercised with them.

In this way the days and weeks in a man-of-war go round. General exercise aloft is the preparation for what is necessary to be done in working the ship at sea. To insure regularity and quickness in so doing, much time has to be devoted at drilling the men at their stations, which is done by *dumb drill* on certain mornings : all the different ropes are manned in their consecutive order, the proper men mustered at them, shown where the ropes are to be found, and the road they are to take in running away with them, till at last they can go from rope to rope without being told. In a well-ordered and disciplined man-of-war all the work aloft, and indeed everywhere, goes on in unison and perfect silence ; the men run aloft, get on the yards, drop or furl a sail, all together. Not a word is spoken except by the officer who is giving the orders, or, in naval parlance, 'carrying on ;' the different officers about the deck and men aloft are only allowed to

make signs for what they want done, but may call out if it is to prevent an accident ; the boatswain and his mates use their 'calls ;' the bugler stands with his eyes on the officer carrying on, ready to sound 'attention,' when every one remains motionless until 'carry on' is sounded, when the work in hand has to be continued. The spare sails, yards, and masts are kept ready for instant change ; the boats carried inside the ship have everything so arranged they may be hoisted out without delay ; no rope is allowed to be left slack, and must always be hauled taut and coiled down—that is, put in a circular heap—the moment it is finished with, which is impressed on every one's mind by the following lines :

'He who does a rope belay
Coils it down, and goes away.
Should he be a leading hand,
He leaves it to another man.'

Ships that are carefully prepared and well worked up, commencing slowly, arrive at great rapidity in the performance of work aloft. We know of a ship that has hoisted out her three large boats in a little under five minutes, the first being out in two minutes ; and in any average squadron the slow ships would get them out in about fifteen to twenty minutes. It must be remembered these boats pull eighteen oars ; one of them is a steamer. When away for fighting service they carry a nine-pounder gun, with all the necessary munitions, the steamer having a complete set of torpedo fittings ; and that when H.M.S. Bombay was burnt one of the boats that had been hoisted out had in her some two hundred men, and floated with them ; so that it is no light matter to throw them in and out of a ship, as is done. The hoisting in has been performed in five minutes ; and it is an evolu-

tion that nowadays compares very favourably with former times.

Sails can be shifted—that is, the one set taken in, sent down on deck from its yard, and the spare one got out from the sail-room, sent up, and set in its place—in from five to fifteen minutes. All sail can be set in from two to five minutes, and taken in and furled in from five to ten minutes. A reef can be taken in a sail in about two minutes; but in very bad weather seven or eight minutes. Masts can be sent down and shifted in from ten to fifteen minutes; and a ship can be prepared for action—which means all light spars sent down from aloft, the bowsprit rigged in, and supports got in the masts ready for ramming—in from four to twenty minutes. In these days the shorter time is that which has actually been reached in various ships.

This exercise aloft develops the men physically, and trains the man-of-war's-man in activity, strength, nerve, and a quick eye, the very essentials for taking part in a sea-fight. In the exercise, brain, eyes, hands, and feet have to work together, all senses and muscles are at full stretch, and the men literally carry their lives in their hands; for there is no evolution aloft without risk to life. Every precaution is taken: the ropes most used are constantly examined; but the emulation is great, the work goes on at racing speed, and now and then scenes occur that can never be forgotten. The result of the exercise aloft is, that when bad weather comes, or there is a sudden call on the ship, or it is necessary to prepare for action, all goes quickly and well. It also brings out the smartest and best men, who are generally the best all round; but it can only be brought to perfection by much

practice and time at sea; and, from the benefit it is to all other points of instruction, we place it in the inner life of the royal navy as second only to discipline.

Though the whole week is mainly taken up with gunnery instruction, on Friday forenoon every one in the ship is at his station for 'action;' the bugle sounds the call, the guns' crews run to their guns and clear them away, dummy cartridges are passed up from the magazine, the torpedo men prepare the torpedoes; all the auxiliary engines are worked, if under steam; riggers, Gatling guns' crews, fire and stretcher parties go to their respective places; the surgeon, with all his assistants, goes to the place appointed for the wounded, and there lay out their paraphernalia; the compartments will be closed and all water-tight doors shut. The moment the bugle sounds to quarters for drill or action every one is silent, and when all the guns are loaded and ready they are so reported to the captain. The lieutenants then drill their respective batteries; imaginary fires will be put out below by the fire-brigade; shells will have their fuses fitted and be passed up to the batteries in dumb-show; rigging will be supposed to be shot away, and will be repaired; masts will be given extra support; tiller-ropes will be shot away and replaced; the fighting-wheel—so called from being in a part of the ship that is best protected—will be used; and all contingencies that can be thought of will be more or less acted. After this has gone on for about twenty minutes there will be a cessation for a minute or two, and then one officer will drill all the batteries and means of offence together; an enemy will be imagined to be first on one side, then on the other; guns will be fired together and

independently; preparation will be made for ramming, torpedoes will be used, the broadsides will be fired by electricity, the Gatling gun will keep up its fire from the top, and all the exertions of a severe action will be passed through.

To prepare and perfect the men for their duties in action, the different batteries are drilled in turn in their watches, and there is invariably some class under instruction: it may be a whole gun's crew, or a class of men from different guns; but whatever may be the class, the men composing it do nothing of the ordinary work of the ship, with the exception of cleaning it in the mornings; directly after divisions in the forenoon, and dinner in the afternoon, they go to drill, remaining until dinner-time and 4 P.M. There is always a course for such classes to go through, those who pass best at the examination being rated 'trained men.' A man-of-war's-man must be a seaman gunner if anything; it is his business, and he should be *au fait* at everything connected with guns. The rifle, sword, field-gun, company, and battalion drill follow very much in the order in which we put them. The rifle and sword are required for boat-service, the field-gun and the company drill for cases when it is necessary to land and make a raid in an enemy's country, no regular troops being available; but the battalion-drill, though it is sometimes taught, can scarcely be called bluejacket's work, and it is doubtful whether the little time spent on it in a sea-going ship is not time thrown away. We may now add torpedo-exercise, and the care of and fitting of electrical gear for their firing and that of the guns. This will become more general as time goes on, but at present it is in the hands of the

seamen gunners and armourers, who are trained in the Vernon at Portsmouth, and are called 'torpedo-men.' The preparing the ship for action as regards her gear aloft is an essential which is generally gone through the first or last Friday in the month; and from first to last of all that comes under the head of 'general quarters,' it will be found that ship which is the quickest and smartest aloft is sure to be the first in the squadron that can be got ready for action. Once a quarter firing takes place at a target: half the allowance may be fired in harbour; but the rest must be at sea, steaming or sailing round a target. Once a year this firing takes the form of prize-firing, when the ship has to steam round the target at good speed; the range must be about 1200 yards; all guns compete. Precision and time of completing the rounds gain the points. The prize, in money, is divided amongst the gun's crew. Those men whose numbers at the gun show their ability, having contributed mostly to the success, get the largest share of the prize.

The rifle exercise in the afternoon and the drill of the landing parties one forenoon are for the purpose of being able to send a party on shore for warlike operations, to which may be added the instructions of the field-guns' crews. Men-of-war are often called on to land their men, either to complete some work, or to commence it, before regular troops can be sent from home. The party sent will be composed of bluejackets, marines, and field-guns, the latter being dragged by men; and in view of such contingencies, it is necessary the men should at least know company-drill and skirmishing, and the guns' crews be able to land and take their guns over any country.

Marines, having been drilled on shore, and second to no troops, are always ready; but the blue-jackets require constant teaching. Opportunities are taken for a 'manœuvre'; the men assemble in boats at a rendezvous; the beach is cleared by the fire of the boats' guns, the boats being in a line. The signal is made to advance and land, and a dash in takes place: the lightest boats, having on board the company detailed as skirmishers, get in first. The men jump out, fall in, extend, and advance; the remainder fall in; the guns are got out of the boats, mounted on their field-carriages, and landed. A party is left in charge of the boats; flanks are guarded. The party goes inland, attacks some place, which perhaps, early in the morning, has been selected and armed; either takes it, or is beaten back, returning to the boats. Guns are got on board first, then the main body, and lastly the rear guard with a rush, the guns from the boats covering their retreat. This after all is but seldom done. So few places fulfil the requirements to do it for *exercise*—fine weather, no sea, a good beach, a close harbour, and some open country—that it only can be done here and there; the landing of the small-arm men generally taking place at some pier, and ending in a march out and back, headed by the band—about as much use for bluejackets as if they were put in a stable at intervals to groom horses, and in consequence be expected to ride. Some care is taken of the rifle-firing. Once a year every man in the ship goes through a firing course, being landed, and firing at a target. Prizes are given to the best shot in the ship and in the companies. A return is sent home and compiled from every ship in the service, so that a man-

of-war's-man has a chance of fairly understanding and being able to use a rifle.

Sword-exercise teaches what its name implies. A useful exercise for bluejackets in case of boat-work; but we have never felt satisfied with it in a sea-going ship, its lessons appearing to us of a most perfunctory nature.

Boat-exercise is most useful. On the sailing day the launches and cutters of the squadron assemble near the flag-ship, and under the charge of the flag-captain are formed into divisions and subdivisions, and then in columns will manœuvre as a sailing-fleet. The steam-pinnaces will, under some captain or commander, manœuvre as a steam-fleet. Both squadrons will use the same signal-books as the ship, so that it is good teaching for the officers in the boats. On the other boat-day, when it is 'maning and arming,' the boats have to be equipped ready for service, and at the given rendezvous, with all despatch. The same on the 'anchor' day; the anchor and cable have to be put in the boat, and sent to a given place, with all speed. In this way preparation is made to use the boats for service, or to assist a ship in distress on shore. The steam-pinnace of ships is the torpedo-boat, having special fittings. These have to be in their place once a quarter, by day and by night, the boat leaving the ship. At one of these exercises the electric-battery and fuses are tried by the explosion of 1lb. tins of powder; and once every six months a service torpedo, of 100lbs., has to be exploded. The efficiency, discipline, and cleanliness of a man-of-war can generally be told by the condition of her boats. If the men pull well, are prompt at their work, quiet, orderly, and well dressed, and their

boat is clean, they will most probably be found to belong to a ship that has also these essentials. It seems to follow 'Like ship like boat,' as 'Like father like son.'

The ordinary seamen and boys are instructed daily, whenever the forenoon and afternoon drills cease. They are separated from the rest of the watch, and taught to be seamen either on deck or aloft, as circumstances will permit.

In the matter of dress the flagship, by signal, details the dress for the day, and by 9 A.M. every one must be so dressed. On Monday and Friday, for the exercise, it is a 'white working-dress' until the dinner-hour, during which every one changes. The men wash themselves in their messes—those going on deck during the breakfast-hour, the others just before cleaning the mess-decks. At the time the men dress no washing takes place. Washing-places have been and are fitted up in ships, but we do not think sufficient care and attention is paid them. Not that the man-of-war's-man is a dirty man; on the contrary he is, we believe, the cleanest of his class in life; but we think the means he has to keep himself clean might be improved.

We will now follow a man through a week's work, and putting him as a maintop-man in the starboard watch, let him commence with being in 'the watch-on-deck' Monday morning, when he is turned out with the others at 4.30; five minutes after, he falls in, and is reported by the petty officer of his part, the captain of the maintop, as 'present.' He then assists in the scrubbing and washing down of the starboard side of the quarter-deck; when that is done, he will wipe over all the paint and woodwork, polishing any brass that may belong to the particular woodwork to which he

is stationed. At six he stows his hammock, and assists to cover the maintop-men's hammocks, which are those stowed in the starboard quarter-deck netting; at 6.30 he goes to his mess for breakfast, finding all the cocoa standing in basins on the table, with a pile of biscuit or bread, as the case may be. Breakfast, including a smoke, is finished by seven, when our man goes to his quarters, polishes his gun, and cleans some particular part of the machinery. At half-past seven he leaves his gun, and, belonging now to the 'watch below,' goes to his mess, washes himself, and, it being his half of the watch to clean the lower parts of the ship, he goes with the first half of the maintop-men to clean the maintop-men's side of a compartment, or perhaps the whole of a compartment. At a quarter-past eight he will clean and polish the wood and bright work of this compartment; and at 8.30 he will take his bag up to his mess and dress himself; taking his bag below at 8.45, stowing it, and, being one of the duty sub. for the day, remains down to stow all the bags as the other men bring them down; then sweeping up and leaving the place fit for inspection. At nine our man goes to his division, and is there inspected by his officer; after prayers, if in harbour, he waits about till 9.30 for the exercise aloft, which lasts until 10.45, when he has to get up the 'hammock gautlines,' they being up and along the deck ready for use, he gets his hammock, unlashes it, puts the bed up in the rigging, makes his blanket fast to the gautline, which is triced up and hauled out taut, the business being over about 11.30, when our man can go below. Should the ship, however, be at sea, or there is no sail-drill, our man would go below as

soon as the prayers were over and the 'watch' called.' At twelve our man has his dinner, his grog at 12.30, and he can smoke until ten minutes past one; if there has been 'drill,' during this time he puts on the dress for the day. At a quarter-past one our man again goes to his gun for a few minutes, while the ship is cleared up after dinner; when that has been done he has to get his hammock and blanket, lash them up, stow them, and trice the gautlines up again. Our man now belongs to the 'watch on deck,' is mustered, and then, with most of the others in the watch, is put to rifle-drill for an hour; after which he has to do any little fitting required for the maintop until four o'clock, when, being relieved, he can go to his mess. At 4.30 our man has his supper, during which time he must change into night clothing. At five he has to clean his arms, and after inspection he, as one of the watch below, gets the 'washing water' for his mess, sorts out the clothes he intends to wash, taking them with the water to some favourite spot on deck. At six, as our man again becomes one of 'the watch,' he may have to hoist up certain boats; but when not wanted can smoke, and scrub and wash his clothes. At 7.30 our man takes down his hammock, then hauls over the hammock-cloths, ceasing his washing at eight o'clock, placing the washing-tub with the clothes in it in a certain place, and going below or smoking as it suits him. At 8.30, being a 'bag-stower,' he will have to see all the bags in his compartment stowed; beyond that he can stay up until 9.30, when he must go to his hammock.

Tuesday morning the work begins at four, and our man, lashing up and stowing his hammock, has then to scrub the dirty hammock

of the previous fortnight's wear. At 5.30 he puts it and the clothes washed over-night on the lines, trices them up, and gets them out taut; his special work after the gautlines, being the maintop-men's lines, the starboard side. Breakfast at the usual time, during which, however, he washes himself; after breakfast all the decks are scrubbed at the same time, and our man, belonging to 'the watch,' again scrubs, &c., the starboard side of the quarter-deck. At eight the watch all cease for the evolution, going on with their work when it is over. At 8.30 on this morning the guns are cleaned; the men dressing at nine; and divisions, with prayers, stations, &c., being at 9.30. As the starboard battery, to which our man belongs, is for drill, one hour at least of the forenoon will be taken up with gun-drill; after that little jobs will be done until 11.30, when the decks are cleared up.

When the ship is cleared up after dinner, the scrubbed hammocks and clothes will be taken in, and one man belonging to the 'watch below' will have to make up and store away the gautlines and clothes-lines. When that is done he will be left to himself until four o'clock. At four o'clock he will be mustered, and assist in clearing up the decks; after supper, and the inspection of his scrubbed hammock by the officer of his division, our man—an upper-yard man—will go up aloft to send down the maintopgallant yard and the maintopgallant mast. This being done, he will assist to clear up the ship, coiling up ropes, hoisting up boats, &c., until six o'clock, when he will be relieved, and have the evening to himself.

Wednesday morning will see our man going through the same routine as he did on Monday morn-

ing, cleaning the upper decks before breakfast and the lower decks after breakfast; but this morning it is the turn of his half of the watch below to clean the messes. He and his messmates clean their mess and the deck belonging to it. At five minutes to eight every one goes on deck for the evolution—our man, as an upper-yardman of the watch below, going to a particular station. When this is over he returns to his mess, finishes it, and, being 'cook of the mess' for the day, remains there when it is inspected, between a quarter to nine and nine. After divisions, prayers, and stations, if not one of a field-gun's crew, our man will be left to himself for the forenoon, except at eleven, when he assists to get up the day's allowance of spirits; and at 11.45, when he goes to the galley to get his mess's dinner, which he cuts up and portions out ready for twelve o'clock; but if one of the field-gun's crew, he will have an hour's instruction on board, or if landed, will not be back and on board until nearly twelve. At 12.30 he goes to the grog-tub for the mess's grog, divides that out, and assists to wash up the plates and basins used during the meal. After dinner and quarters he belongs to the 'watch,' and gets an hour's sword-exercise; then, till four o'clock, being at odd jobs. At four he goes below, and at 4.15 to the galley for the mess's tea, which he divides out, after the meal washing up the basins. Then as usual comes the cleaning arms, inspection, and the evolution, after which he is not wanted till six; and at six, becoming one of the 'watch,' finishes up any of the clearing up, or hoisting up boats, not done. At 8.45 he will clear up his mess, and remain in it while the rounds go, being responsible it is quite correct.

Thursday morning, our man does not turn out till six, stows his hammock, has his breakfast, and, after the guns are cleaned, belonging to the watch, polishes the upper-deck wood and bright work. At 8.45 he is mustered, perhaps questioned as to his duty; and at eight is aloft, crossing the maintopgallant yard, remaining up till the yards are squared. After dressing himself, going to his division, and prayers, or prayers and muster, as the case may be, our man, if belonging to one of the small-arm companies, is drilled for an hour; if landed for drill he gets back to the ship in time for dinner. Thursday afternoon nothing is done; but at four our man again, as one of the watch, is mustered, and performs all the usual four to six work. Gun-gear is cleaned after supper instead of the arms, and our man will polish and show for inspection some of the gear of his gun. He then goes aloft to take his part in the evolution. At six he can scrub and wash his clothes, if he requires to do so; and at eight, if one of the duty-half of the watch, will have to dry up the washing-place.

Friday morning sees our man out at four, to hang up the clothes he may have washed, tricing up the lines, and then scrubbing the upper decks and the mess decks, as on Monday and Wednesday. This morning it is his turn at the compartments. At eight he comes up as usual for the evolution, dresses himself, stows his bag, and goes up off the lower decks. At nine divisions and prayers; after which he stands about waiting for 'general quarters' at 9.30, which lasts until about 10.40. Then, at eleven again, our man will be wanted for furling sails that were loosed at eight o'clock; this will keep him on deck till about 11.30. During

the dinner-hour he changes to the dress for the day, and being one of the watch in the afternoon, after he has been at his station assisting the boats to leave the ship for whatever may be ordered, he will be aloft most of the afternoon scraping masts and booms, or perhaps scrubbing deck-clothes and such common gear as is used for keeping the ship clean. The wash-clothes may be got down when the boats are away, and the evening is spent as usual, our man being in the watch from six to eight.

Saturday sees our man out at four stowing his hammock; then scrubbing, scrubbing, scrubbing till about ten o'clock; he has his breakfast at the usual time, but before that he has been at the upper decks. After it there is the gun-gear and the upper deck for him again, it being his watch on deck. At eleven the guns are polished till twenty minutes to twelve; but after dinner, when the ship is cleared up, our man, belonging to the 'watch below,' will probably be left to himself until four o'clock, when it becomes his watch. After the inspection, the sails are refurled—called 'mending the furl'—the yards are squared, and the decks cleared up as usual.

Sunday morning sees our man out at 4.30 to clean the ship, it being again his turn; in the watch below cleaning the mess falls to his lot this day. Divisions are at 9.30. Inspection of the ship and church; which being over about 11.15, nothing more is done. There are prayers after evening inspection, and then the ship is cleared up as on ordinary days: in some ships there is a voluntary evening service at seven. Our man on this Sunday having the six to eight watch may or may not have a boat to hoist up; otherwise his time is his own all day.

On the following week our man will sleep in until six on Monday and Wednesday, and he will be *on watch* exactly the reverse of the week we have followed him through. Should the ship have been at sea, the watch-keeping goes on through the night, the reliefs being at eight, midnight, and four. The men have no evolutions at eight and 5.20; are saved landing on Wednesday or Thursday and all boat-work; but besides the drills, inspections, cleanings, scrubbings, and washings we have detailed as performed in harbour, have to do all that is required in making, shortening, and furling sails, that wind, weather, and station-keeping in a squadron may require during day and night. Men that are under special instruction, excused for training, or going through the preliminary exercise for their rifle-firing, only clean the ship in their turns; from 8 A.M. to 8 P.M. they are under the gunnery lieutenant. Every day directly after prayers the class commences drilling by itself, going on till 11.45, and commencing immediately after dinner and lasting till 4 P.M. Men belonging to boats have to go away when their boats are wanted, whether in their watch or watch below; but if belonging to the duty cutter, the boat most used, they are excused altogether all work of the ship. The captain's boat's crew is the only other so excused. At sea, with the exception of the class, no one is excused, and the class even keep night watch, but whether in harbour or at sea, from necessary causes, it will be found a man even when *excused* gets very little consecutive, and therefore good, instruction—half a day on Monday, a whole day on Tuesday and Wednesday, perhaps one hour on Thursday forenoon and Friday af-

ternoon, but no more—the only consecutive instruction being from Monday after dinner to Wednesday evening. Twelve hours' instruction in a week is the very outside, boat-work and all other teaching given up for it. The men who are not being specially taught get rifle instruction one hour a week; a man belonging to a boat and the ship in harbour will probably only have this once a fortnight. Sword instruction once a fortnight, gun-drill once a week, but with general quarters, which is not an instruction, and the quarterly firing at a target, a man gets somewhat more at his gun than at first appears.

Ordinary seamen and boys, whenever they are not at gunnery instruction, go to seamanship; but going from one thing to another, the classes are of the deadliest description, and never seem to advance; one sees and hears the same thing over and over again to the last day of the commission. At sea the classes continually have to break off, leaving gun, rifle, sword, and seamanship instructions to trim, make, or shorten sail; and this happens more particularly in a squadron. In harbour, if a boat has to be cleared it is tried to be done by the watch not at drill; a few men only come, too few to carry out man-of-war fashion, and hoist the things in properly. It must also be borne in mind how much refitting, coaling, &c., interferes with all regular teaching; that at sea, from bad weather, there is often none for days; and in harbour, if after or during the refitting *leave* is given to the men, weeks may elapse without any taking place. As the men pass out of their gunnery-drill, or become able seamen, they are exempted from further teaching; but we fear few pass out at the proper standard—the

temptation is too great, the standard gets lowered, and teachers point out the *number* they have brought to perfection. One thing often happens—the gunnery lieutenant continually finds men who manage to escape him; some men have been known to manage a whole commission and never belong to a single class; and we hold that these things show the perfunctory nature of the gunnery teaching in a ship while serving abroad or in a squadron, and that the time has come when naval barracks are a necessity, and also that every seaman in the service should be a seaman gunner, the teaching for which should take place in the barracks, leaving only small gunnery classes and seamanship to be taught afloat; classes to which, from their smallness, more care would be given, and, better still, leave time and opportunity for the all-important seamanship; for after all, it is on this one point the whole British navy hangs together.

We have shown in this account of the internal economy of her Majesty's ships, that the teaching going on for the naval service may be divided into two classes—the sailor and the gunner, and that the latter should be taught in England in fixed establishments, it being only possible to learn the former in a ship in commission at sea. To carry out this idea fully, we would advocate that the boys, as they leave the home training-ships, be sent to sea for two or three years; during that time to have but the slightest gunnery instruction, as very little would be sufficient to enable them to take their subordinate place in action; but on their return from foreign service they should go through the complete gunnery course, taking a year, and living in barracks on shore, the second time they go to sea going as 'seamen gunners.'

In this way the classes afloat that we deprecate would be avoided, and a man, instead of going from one thing to another, would have more time for work when work was to be done, and to himself when there was nothing to be done ; for it must be remembered a man-of-war's man has not so many hours' work a day, like an artisan on shore ; but, as we have shown, his day begins generally at four or half-past four in the morning, and goes on until nine at night ; that at sea he is out of his hammock—though, perhaps, able to sleep on the deck—half every night ;

and during the day he gets snatches of work, snatches of instruction, with snatches of time to himself ; and in each and all of these he is liable to be broken in on. The internal economy of royal ships has bits added to it here and there ; and we wish to see a fresh beginning made, believing that if what can only be well done in a ship in commission is done—all else being done under different circumstances—more zeal will be developed by officers and men, both in the shore establishments for gunnery and, last and best, in our ships afloat.

THE FALSE AND THE TRUE :

A Reply to 'Women's Taps.'

I.

WHEN a chord in the harp is broken
It mars the harmonious strain ;
But the master-hand can replace it,
And make it as perfect again.

II.

So Time, Life's master-spirit,
Can with skilful touch restore
The chord of love in a human heart,
Though recklessly snapt before.

III.

And when gentler hand shall prompt it
The old theme to renew,
In a flood of glorious music
False love shall be lost in the true.

F. E. A.

A PARISIAN MARRIAGE.

PART II.

AT THE CHURCH.

WHILE the carriage of the bride is on its way to the church, we will anticipate its arrival by some few minutes and observe what is going forward in the Place de l'Eglise, where from between ten and eleven o'clock the rumour of a grand wedding being about to take place has drawn together a crowd of spectators. Here are *mar-chands de nouveautés*, milliners, and *modistes* of both sexes, who have come to seek inspirations; some poor would-be *élégantes* eager to see the latest toilettes, and quite as large a preponderance of women as though it were the Place de la Roquette, and the scene an execution.

Messieurs the footmen in livery, all with their best calves on, converse among themselves of fashionable life, indicating that they know many things of which the general public are supremely ignorant. They cast a look of cold contempt upon the crowd, which has not, like them, the right of entry to the antechambers of the noble faubourg.

A considerable number of *invités* are already in the church awaiting the arrival of the bride, who has kept them, they think, in suspense quite long enough. At length her carriage draws up; the fat coachman and the footmen have bouquets adorned with favours in their buttonholes, and they all appear to have their opinion upon the marriage which is about to be solemnised.

'It is our turn to-day to marry

our demoiselle,' say they to the other servants. 'Ah, if it had been my demoiselle instead of monsieur's, she should have married some one else than that—a *panné*, without a sou to support his starving title!'

Meanwhile the bridal party have ascended the church-steps, and one hears the suisse's staff resounding on the sonorous pavement as the victims, assisted by their respective families, advance majestically up the great nave of the church, between a compact crowd, which rises, stands on tip-toe, and even mounts upon the chairs, the better to see the bride and bridegroom pass.

Every one is bedizened—glittering with stars and orders. It is as though the front of the shop in the Palais Royal, where all the constellations in the globe are displayed, is advancing. One cannot look at X., for instance, without blinking. Services rendered to four consecutive governments and to five foreign powers have produced this blaze of illumination. It must be admitted that he bears his crosses with becoming cheerfulness. Close by is Z., resplendent and only lately decorated. Despite the heat he wears a rich overcoat, in order to reproduce his decoration on it, and it is asserted that he even wears a ribbon in the buttonhole of his flannel under-vest. The stained-glass windows of the church, with the sun shining brilliantly through them, produce a singular effect, which some of the ladies ought to have been

warned of. The Marquise d'A. looks as though she had the yellow jaundice; the Comtesse de B., who is naturally of a yellow tint, by the aid of that bright bit of cobalt is a rich sea-green; and as for the Duchesse de C., spite of all the pearl-powder she has laid on, her complexion is of the very fieriest red. Beside this group of ladies, beyond the range of the solar spectrum, however, is Madame de P., an ancient widow exceedingly anxious to get married again, and the green trimmings to whose *costume collant* say plainly enough that she has not yet lost hope; while on her right is the sempiternal Marquise de Q., in the most juvenile of *chapeaux* and the brightest of robes.

The moment the procession has passed a buzz of conversation ensues, and one overhears the following dialogue between two female friends of the family of the bride—Mesdames M. and N., mothers with daughters to marry, of course:

'Had you seen the bridegroom before?'

'Once, but in the evening; he seemed to me then much better than he really is.'

'That is just what I was about saying. The Leblancs have been praising him to me as a man young, slender, witty, and distinguished-looking. To hear them talk one would fancy him an Antinous.'

'Well, if he is an Antinous, if not exactly antique, he is dilapidated enough to be so.'

'Yes, he has crows'-feet already. Only in the evening of course they would not show so much. Slender and distinguished-looking too! That is to say, he is a skeleton; one sees that at a glance, in spite of all his padding. Perhaps, however, he is witty.'

'What, with a face like that, without animation, insipid-look-

ing, the profile of a sheep's head! It is hardly possible.'

'What would you expect? The Leblancs wanted a title. Well, they have secured one.'

'To think of sacrificing one's child, an only daughter too worth millions, merely to become parents of a Comtesse.'

'Ah, *mon Dieu!* Still, who can say that the little thing will be unhappy? Between ourselves, so far as mind goes, Clotilde is not particularly strong; though she is rattlesome enough, it is certain that she cannot be compared to your Mathilde or to my Alice.'

'Quite true, my dear; you cannot imagine the good sense and reasoning Mathilde displays for her age. It was only yesterday she said to me—I ought not, perhaps, to repeat it to you, I, her mother, because it looks as if I were extolling her—she said, "Ah, well! I never would have been guilty of such an act of stupidity as Clotilde. To marry a title, indeed! What I want is a husband who is very rich; because you know, mamma, I am accustomed to our style of living, and I should not like to have to drop down to anything different."'

'What thorough good sense! It is just like my Alice. The child's judgment is astonishing. She—who is that *chapeau toit de chaume* looking towards us—to the right—with a glass on her nose?'

'That is the Baronne de Cerfeuil. O my dear, do not speak of her; it would be improper. I have heard dreadful things about the woman.'

'What? What have you heard? Tell me in a whisper, so that the little ones may not hear.'

Madame M. whispers in Madame N.'s ear.

'Impossible! Well, I never!'

'She is not at all young, but

well plastered and painted. However, one need not be surprised at that; it is generally the case with rickety articles.'

To return, however, to the bridal pair. Clotilde, according to her own account, was enchanted with everything. As the great organ pealed forth a triumphal march, she observed, she said, hundreds of smiling faces turned towards her; and at the other end of the church, in an ideal framework of sunshine, incense, velvet, and gold, caught sight of the two gilt armchairs in which she and Gontran had to sit before the *bon Dieu*.

'I do not know,' writes she, 'why an old engraving which is in my father's cabinet came at that moment into my mind. This engraving represents the entry of Alexander into Babylon; he is riding upon an elephant glittering with precious stones. I felt like he must have felt; only you know Alexander was a pagan, and had many crimes to reproach himself with, whilst I was pure. O, I felt that; I should not have enjoyed it so deliciously without; and besides, I had confessed myself the day before. The *bon Dieu* smiled upon me, and with His paternal hand motioned me to sit in His house, upon His crimson carpet, in His gilt armchair. The spheres, moved with joy, played music to me; and above, from the dazzling stained-glass windows, the archangels, full of goodwill, smiled as they looked down on my innocence. As I passed up the church, the heads bowed before me as a field of corn before the wind. Friends, relations, acquaintances, enemies, all inclined themselves; and I saw—for one sees everything despite oneself on these solemn occasions—that they found nothing to object to in me. Arrived at the gilt armchair, I

bent with restrained precipitation over the *prie-dieu*, and I uttered a short prayer. The organ ceased its song of triumph, and I could hear poor mamma bursting into tears beside me. O, I can understand what a mother's heart must feel at such a ceremony! Whilst regarding with perfect self-possession the clergy, advancing in the midst of all their sacerdotal pomp, I noticed Gontran, who seemed irritated; he was straight, stiff, his nostrils dilated, and his lips compressed. I have always felt a little angry with him for not being more sensitive to what was happening to me on that day; still men rarely realise the poetry of existence.'

Whilst all this is passing through Clotilde's mind, some of the distinguished female friends of the bridegroom—young women, and women called young—are interchanging remarks upon her.

'Well, what is your opinion of the bride?'

'Why, to tell truth, I really did not expect to find her so good-looking.'

'She is certainly seen to advantage to-day. And yet I don't know who could have made her a toilette in such bad taste.'

'It is all white *faille*, I believe?'

'*Faille, faille*—there is nothing commoner now. And then those ruches, they are put on fully the eighth of an inch too high. She is dressed like a perfect fright.'

'But, Baroness, is Gontran really in love with her?'

'Gontran! Who is he?'

'You know perfectly well, my dear—the bridegroom, of course' (smiling); 'and so you have really forgotten his Christian name?'

The Baroness de Cerfeuil, perfectly impassible, contents herself with replying that M. de Vieux-Castel has not made her his confidante.

‘Altogether,’ observes the Marchioness, ‘for a little *parvenue*, this future Comtesse is really not amiss.’

‘O, certainly, for those who are partial to weeping willows. Thin, with nothing but her hair, which she certainly makes the most of. But look there, my dear; there are bundles enough beside the bride.’

‘There are, indeed; still what can one expect? Distinction is not to be bought otherwise; some of these people would be only too happy to invest a little of their ready cash in it. Do you know the fortune of these Lenoirs, Leroux, or whatever their name is?’

‘Leblanc, you mean. It is impossible for one to know very exactly anything about these sort of people, who dabble in such things as sugar, colza, petroleum, and guano. One can never be certain of the amount of their incomes.’

‘At any rate, there is a very fine dowry for the present, and I am enchanted on Gontran’s account, for he is a charming fellow. You, too, are pleased, are you not, Baroness?’

‘Certainly; and I am remarkably curious to hear all the virtues with which Monseigneur will endow him in his little discourse.’

MONSEIGNEUR’S DISCOURSE—THE CEREMONY.

MONSEIGNEUR addresses to the happy pair a warm allocution full of agreeable personalities, which are particularly grateful to them, as of course on this occasion they and all connected with them are necessarily paragons of virtue. This species of discourse is usually a kind of stereotype, varied according to circumstances; and the panegyric is addressed to the bride and bridegroom in order to tem-

per the acrimony of the duties of man and wife, which will be taught them during the Mass, when the officiating priest will dryly establish the debit and credit account of the house of business which is being established under his auspices. Monseigneur set forth that the wife owes obedience to her husband, which is sufficient—for the moment it is essential that he leads her to the altar; later she will undertake to lead him. The bride, in her reminiscences of the ceremony, describes Monseigneur’s discourse as a most admirable one.

‘It was pronounced,’ she remarks, ‘with all that unction, that dignity, and that persuasive charm which he is universally admitted to possess. He spoke of our two families “in which pious belief is, like honour, hereditary.” One might have heard a pin fall; every one listened to the words of the reverend prelate with such attention. Then he turned towards me, and made me comprehend, with a thousand delicate allusions, that I was united to one of the most ancient and honourable families, and one of the noblest officers in the French army. “Heaven smiles,” said he, “upon the Christian warrior who places his sword at his country’s service, and, when he throws himself into the thick of the fight, can lay his hand upon his heart and shout this noblest of all war-cries, “I believe!”’ How all this was said! Such grandeur in this sacred eloquence, causing a quiver to run through the entire congregation. But this was not all. Monseigneur then addressed himself to Gontran, and, with a voice soft and insinuating as it had just been vibrating and enthusiastic, said to him:

“Monsieur, you are about to take as your companion a young

girl" (I scarcely dare recall all the graceful and delicate things Monseigneur said when speaking of me) "holily brought up by a Christian mother, who has shared with her, if I may say it, all the virtues of her heart, all the charms of her mind." (Mamma commenced to sob.) "She will love her husband as she has loved her father, who from her cradle has cultivated in her those sentiments of nobility of soul and pure disinterestedness which" (papa smiled, in spite of himself) "animate this father, whose name is a household word among the poor, and whose place in the temple of prayer is on the bench of the elect" (papa is churchwarden). "And you, monsieur, I feel assured, will respect, as it deserves, so much purity combined with such ineffable candour" (I felt my eyes fill with tears). "And without disregarding the perishable physical charms of the angel who is this day confided to you, you will thank Heaven for qualities a hundredfold more precious and more durable with which she is so liberally endowed."

'I could restrain myself no longer, and burst into tears. Never had our holy religion appeared nobler, grander, or more persuasive to my view. Whilst Monseigneur was pronouncing these last words, a ray of sunlight fell upon his venerable forehead. I saw him thus through my tears. He was no longer a man, but an angel, though rather advanced in years, it must be confessed.

'We were now made to rise and stand opposite to each other, like the divine spouses in Raffaele's picture, when we exchanged the gold ring, and Monseigneur said, in a grave slow voice, some Latin words, the sense of which I did not understand, but which moved me infinitely; for the prelate's

hand, white, delicate, and transparent, seemed to be blessing me. The censers, with their bluish smoke, swung by infantile hands, spread through the air I know not what pious perfume. What a delicious day it seemed for me! All that next passed is confused in my memory. I was dazzled, carried away. I remember one thing, however—the bonnet with white roses with which Louise had bedecked herself. How strange it is that some people have not the slightest taste!

Meanwhile the organ resumes its rights, pealing forth the music of *Don Giovanni*—fashionable music arranged for these particular occasions. One recognises the lamentations of the abandoned Elvira, the cries of rage of Donna Anna, and the grumbling of Mazetto the husband. One, however, ought only to see in this the good intentions of the organist, which were no doubt creditable enough at bottom. At the elevation of the Host the trio of the masks is played, and every one bows his head, with the exception of some few whom the stiffness of a too-well-starched collar prevents from properly humiliating themselves.

But the women are most edifying. How ardently the little De M. prays the *bon Dieu* to preserve her friend's good husband and give a similar one to herself! 'I shall sell myself at a high price, like he has done,' remarks handsome P. to his friend Q. As to Madame S., she bends to the very ground—one must add that she is extremely short-sighted—and eagerly seizes the opportunity to examine closely the trimming of the robe of the lady in front of her, which she thus notes in detail without running the risk of being accused of indiscreet curiosity. At the end of the *Salutaris*

Hostia, to the air of *Batti, batti*, Madame S. has calculated to a nicety how much both the robe and trimming have cost. One observes a curious little manœuvre between a couple of opposite sexes, who evidently knew each other, for their eyes betrayed them. They had recourse to the electric telegraph—in this instance a prayer-book, which is held open or shut, according to the sentiments of the owner: if open, it indicates that the door of the heart will not be closed to the appeals of love—the thing is very simple.

At a wedding, people generally whisper and sneer quite as much as they do at a funeral, and even the young girls present cannot refrain from following the example set them by their elders.

‘Alice dear,’ remarks one, ‘Clotilde looks pale, does she not?’

‘Well, yes; but this kind of thing has of course a certain effect upon one. Besides, you know white is very trying to the complexion.’

‘Would you believe, pet, that bound up together as Clotilde and I am, I was one of the last to be informed of her marriage? One would not have stolen her Gontran from her, however; he is not good-looking enough for that. What is your opinion of him?’

‘He would not be amiss if he had less beard.’

‘Isn’t it frightful, that forest he has on his face? Whereabouts would one have to kiss a man with so much hair as that?’

‘I am sure I don’t know,’ replies Alice, laughing in her prayer-book; ‘I have never kissed a man with a beard.’

‘Ah, I understand; your cousin Hyacinthe only has moustaches.’

Alice, nudging her friend with her elbow, begs her to be quiet,

as mamma is behind and will hear what she is saying; whereupon the conversation takes another turn, the friend remarking,

‘Only think! It is Julie who collects; quite an event, too—for a wonder she is not in her green dress.’

‘She dragged it enough in all the *salons* this season. Who is with her?’

‘I don’t know him. He doesn’t seem particularly amused, does he?’

‘With Julie on his arm, that is not astonishing.’

‘How wicked you are!’

‘Not at all, my little pet lamb; in proof of which I am going to show you a handsome man.’

‘Where, where?’

‘To the right—in almost the same line as ourselves, on the other side.’

‘I can’t see him.’

‘Near the fifth pillar—tall and dark; he is twirling his moustache. But don’t stare like that, he will see you.’

‘Ah, I see him—tall and decorated. He must be an officer.’

‘Would you marry an officer?’

‘If he were a general I would.’

‘But the generals are all old.’

‘It seems they are going to change all that. Papa said the other day that the Government intended to have only young generals. Then you understand I would marry one who was very rich, and Clotilde could not give herself airs about her Gontran.’

‘That’s true; she does not look so, but at bottom I know she must be very proud.’

IN THE SACRISTY.

THE *Ite missa est* has been pronounced. Great tumult ensues as the bride passes under the cross-fire of all these merciless looks. The poor thing blushes in presence

of so much unrestrained curiosity, blushes and looks down on the ground. Still she has in reality more assurance than her husband, the bearded ex-Zouave. And so she need, for she has to run the gauntlet of hostile criticism, not only from her own but the opposite sex, conceited young *gommeux* of the noble faubourg, friends of the bridegroom; one of whom asks in our hearing,

‘Well, children, what do you think of the bride?’

‘Faugh! insignificant face; branches enough about her, but no trunk.’

‘That’s true; she is very thin, but then she is well stuffed. Her wedding dress is lined with bank-notes. It seems old Leblanc has a heap of money-bags.’

‘She ought to have worn some about her, it would have improved her figure.’

‘Don’t laugh like that, René; you forget you are inside a church.’

‘You surely don’t expect me to cry, Gaston! It is not I who have just been married.’

A perfect *queue* is formed at the door of the sacristy. Hats for which there is no longer any room are borne aloft on the ends of sticks and umbrellas, reminding one of the scarecrows gardeners place in their vegetable beds. The relations of both parties are seen in a row at the end of the sacristy with the happy couple, separated from the crowd of *invités* by a kind of wooden barrier, which serves to restrain the invading effusion of friends, who cannot always contain themselves under such solemn circumstances. Every one pushes, elbows, shakes hands, crushes, and kisses. Mesdames M. and N. manage to advance up to Madame Leblanc, saying,

‘Dear friend, we feel so happy. In presence of happiness such as

this, mothers are made to understand each other. Your son-in-law is charming; and as for Clotilde, she is a perfect angel.’ (They all embrace.) ‘What happiness is in store for them!’

As they retire, Madame M. remarks to Madame N., ‘You mark my words; there will be a separation before a couple of years are over.’

The Marchioness congratulates the bridegroom,

‘Ah, Count, you do not deserve such a jewel as Madame.’

Which said, they shake hands with *empressement*. Alice and her friend offer their congratulations to the bride:

‘Let us kiss you, dearest, as we love you much, very much.’

The kissings over, Alice whispers in the bride’s ear,

‘Your husband is simply ravishing.’

A moment afterwards, as she and her friend are retiring, she observes to the latter,

‘What a simpleton he looks! He never said a word to us.’

The Baroness de Cerfeuil now advances:

‘M. de Vieux-Castel, I wish you all the happiness you deserve.’

They bow to each other, and the Baroness beats a retreat.

Gaston and René next present themselves, saying to the bridegroom,

‘Gontran, we have to offer you our sincerest congratulations; and to the bride, ‘Madame, we venture to repeat the same to you. We are too much the friends of Gontran to say all the good of him that we think.’

Shakings of hands and bowings follow this pretty speech. When they are out of hearing Gaston remarks to René,

‘She is rather stupid, is she not?’

To which René replies, ‘A per-

fect goose.' Then addressing a friend, he asks his opinion.

'Well, judging from what is going on,' rejoins the latter, 'I should say that the place where people kiss the most is in a sacristy.'

The *petit cher*, who was not invited, thinks it necessary to offer his congratulations; but when, radiant with smiles, he approaches the bridegroom, he finds a wooden face in front of him. No matter, every one has seen him in the sacristy, and knows now that he is a man of position. At this moment one overhears a lady on one's right inviting another to come and have some pigeon-shooting.

'I prefer the pistol,' replies her friend. 'At twenty paces I can match the Princess de D.'

One pities with all one's heart the parents of the bride; this continual smile of an hour and a half, which they are forced to preserve, must certainly have the effect of increasing the crows'-feet of Madame Mère, already beginning to develop themselves. She is thinking of this, you may be sure.

And what are the bride's thoughts at the moment when every one is pushing and pressing around her, and she answers all their smiles and compliments with a little salute, in which she desires religious emotion should be apparent?

'I was conscious,' said she, 'that something solemn had taken place,

and that I had just bound myself in eternal bonds. I was really married. Then, by a singular train of thought, my mind reverted to the piteous little marriage of the day before. I compared the retired dealer in spring-mattresses and iron-bedsteads, all embarrassed as he was in his black coat, to Monseigneur in his gorgeous alb and stole; the commonplace and trivial phraseology of Monsieur le Maire with the eloquent outbursts of the venerable prelate. What a contrast! Here, the world; there, heaven! Here, the coarse prose of the counting-house; there, celestial poetry!

'Gontran, to whom I afterwards spoke on the subject, said to me,

"But, *chère amie*, you do not, perhaps, know that at the Mairie the marriage is performed gratis, whilst at the church it costs—"

'I put my hand before his mouth. I was unwilling he should utter any such impiety. Gratis, indeed! That is precisely what I find so unbecoming in the affair.'

It is unnecessary to describe the wedding-dinner. Only the more distant relations and friends profit by this.

'Is her fortune solid?' thinks the bridegroom's maiden aunt, while accepting some iced pudding.

'Will he make her happy?' asks the bride's mother of herself, weeping into her champagne-glass.

'I shall be heartily glad when it's all over,' sighs the husband, gazing into his wife's eyes.

MY LOVE AND I.

I.

A GLIST'NING river 'neath a morning's sky ;
Gently we're gliding down, my love and I.
The oars lie idle as we float along ;
Softly I sing, and this my tender song,
' O lady, life is short, and love is strong !'

II.

The banks shine green, a willow's bough hangs low,
A swallow skims across, a black-winged crow
Caws loud, and wakes a soft-voiced distant throng
Of warblers sweet, to join with me in song,
' O lady, life is short, and love is strong !'

III.

The sun mounts higher in the cloudless sky,
Still we float on, my gentle love and I.
A rustling wind the slender reeds among
Bends their light forms and mingles with my song,
' O lady, life is short, and love is strong !'

IV.

The noontide changes to the golden gleam
Of parting daylight, and the rippling stream
Shines with a wondrous radiance. All along
The dark'ning bank's echo flings back my song,
' O lady, life is short, and love is strong !'

V.

The mists are gath'ring now, the rose-red light has fled ;
A mournful bird trills low that day is dead ;
The flowers hang limp and brown, and shadows long
Creep through the sombre pines ; yet still my song,
' O lady, life is short, and love is strong !'

VI.

In tears and dimness on the banks we part ;
Night hides the shining stream ; time stills the heart ;
Only its chords vibrating yet prolong
The soft sad cadence of my tender song,
' O lady, life is short, and love is strong !'

C. L. P.

MY SWIM TO THE TARGET.

A Story of Shoeburyness.

BY AN ARTILLERY OFFICER.

Few, perhaps, among the civilian population of England have any very certain idea as to the whereabouts of Shoeburyness; fewer still, perhaps, have been there. To travel down from Fenchurch-street to the extreme end of the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway is of itself a journey not to be undertaken without some definite object in view; and when to this is added a tramp of some two miles along yielding sand and shingle, or, as an alternative, about four miles of uninteresting road, it is easy to understand that few tourists are to be found energetic enough to travel so far merely to see the place and return; for stay there they cannot, there being no hotel of any description in the little place.

Shoeburyness then, for the benefit of the uninitiated, may be defined as a 'little noisy place near Southend.' As to its physical characteristics, it is a heterogeneous collection of barracks, batteries, and sandbanks. To the stranger approaching it, it presents a most uninviting aspect, especially should the tide happen to be out. For then becomes apparent the interminable reaches of sand that stretch away out to sea for miles in their unvarying and dreary flatness, broken only here and there by the black form of a target or by the pegs driven into the yielding soil to mark the ranges. Nevertheless it is to this very dismal expanse that Shoeburyness owes its importance in

military eyes, and which makes it what it is—the great experimental and practice station for the British artillery.

Everything is quiet enough there till eight o'clock or thereabouts. Then the observer sees here and there a flag run up on the summit of a battery or casemate, and the roar of the guns begins and lasts for two or three hours, almost without intermission. Looking out to sea one may perceive clouds of smoke rolling away, far up in the blue sky, like white balls, as the shells burst in the distance, and may hear the noise of the report floating lazily back after an apparently interminable lapse of time. When it is remembered that of the thousands of fuses of all kinds turned out of the Woolwich Arsenal some three per cent have to be proved by actual experiment, one may form some conception of the appearance of Shoeburyness on a busy day.

Enough, however, of description for the present. Even to this remote corner of England has enterprise penetrated, and when last I was there the foundation of a great hotel was being laid. Soon, no doubt, it will be as great a resource for the ubiquitous 'Arry as other portions of her Majesty's dominions. I should not have ventured to intrude it upon my readers but for an adventure which happened to me there on one occasion, and which went very near to depriving the British public of this interesting recital

and the Royal Regiment of Artillery of the services of a 'most promising young officer,' as no doubt the *Times* would have recorded.

In the year 187— I was going through what is technically known as the 'long course,' a curriculum of instruction in gunnery theoretical and practical; the former at Woolwich, and the latter at Shoeburyness—each part lasting six months. We had been enjoying ourselves at our seaside residence for three out of these six months exceedingly; for we had been fortunate enough to have gone there in the summer months; and between boating and bathing and playing lawn-tennis, in a modified form known as 'sticky,' in courts constructed out of the boards of old targets past work, the time had passed very pleasantly. It was now August, and a very hot one; the sun burned in the heavens like a red coal, and scorched up the scanty water that the sand-beds contained, till we had to send miles away to fetch what was required for the use of the barracks. Work of any kind was an effort. One felt inclined to spend the day swimming lazily about, or sitting on a warm rock after the fashion of Tennyson's merman. It was one of these aquatic excursions which got me into the greatest scrape I have ever been in, or that I ever shall be in, I hope, as the sensation was anything but pleasant.

I must premise that I was a very fair swimmer, having learned that art, amongst many other useful things, at the Academy, and progressed favourably in it during a course of seaside fort residences. My great ambition had always been to swim round the 2000* target some day when the tide was in, and at length I determined to make the attempt. The

feat seems easy enough, no doubt, but I was no Captain Webb; and amongst my fellow-officers there were few who would have attempted it, so I felt rather inclined to be able to say that I had been there. Confiding my intention to no one, I started one day from the gun-pier just before slack water, counting on getting back before the tide turned again.

It was a hot day, as I have before said, and I swam very slowly; however, I arrived at my destination without much difficulty. The framework on which the target floated offered a pleasant resting-place, and I lay down on it lazily, intending to take some five minutes' breathing-time, and then strike out for home. But alas for the feebleness of human resolutions! Between the warm sun and the long swim and the recumbent posture, I had not been there two minutes before I was fast asleep. I had a curious dream. I had been reading a rather wild book of speculative astronomy that morning, and had been somewhat struck by the writer's theory that the end of the world would come through the fiery vapours and lava of the interior of the earth breaking through the thin crust thereof. I dreamed now that such a catastrophe was imminent, and that I was calmly inspecting a pressure-gauge to ascertain how long the globe would yet endure. Higher and higher ran the warning hand upon the dial, and at length, with a mighty crash, the world exploded, and I was hurled, not into chaos, but into the water of the estuary of the Thames!

Thoroughly awakened, as the reader may suppose, I rose to the surface, gulping down a mouthful of water swallowed in the surprise. As I clutched the framework beside me, I was conscious

of a dazzling red flash like sheet-lightning, followed by a tremendous report and a rattling all about me, as though a shower of hail were falling. I had seen too much of artillery not to know what this astonishing meteor was—a shrapnel shell.

Perhaps there may be some of my readers ignorant of what such a missile is; for, indeed, it is of somewhat late invention. Let them imagine, then, a cylindrical shell of iron, ogival-headed, and containing as many bullets as it will conveniently hold, comfortably set in a bed of rosin. At the bottom thereof is a small charge of powder, ignited by a time-fuze bored to burn any required time. On this delightful machine exploding out fly the bullets, and, by the inexorable laws of dynamics, partaking of the original motion of the shell, cover the ground before them for hundreds of yards with a *feu d'enfer*, as of a whole regiment firing volleys.

Such an implement of destruction is very well to talk about; but when its violence is directed against oneself, there is less pleasure in the contemplation. Clearly I had slept so long that the ordinary afternoon practice had begun, and from two guns evidently, or the one shot could not have followed the other so rapidly. Only a few seconds had I for these thoughts ere I saw a red flash leap out from the flag-crowned battery on shore. Instantly I dived deep as I could, and heard, deadened by the water above me, the sharp report of the shell. As I rose to the surface again, I saw white splinters on the woodwork of the target, that showed how true the aim had been. Scarcely had I time to take breath when the red flash leaped again, and again I dived. They were good gun detachments—none better any-

where; and the guns were light ones—16-pounders. Often had I competed myself in a race with time, running the gun up again almost before the recoil had ceased, and ramming home shot and cartridge ere it had reached its former position again. Now no doubt my comrades were hard at work, wondering, perhaps, what had become of me.

Eight separate times had I dived, and my strength was failing fast. Even now there was a ringing noise in my head which almost stupefied me, and was growing more painful every instant. If I stood up on the framework and tried to signal to the shore, I must stand at least one shot, and that was almost certain death.

Even in that desperate moment an absurd idea came into my head, as such things will come sometimes. I had read somewhere of an ingenious recipe for finding a safe place on ship-board in action by putting one's head out at a hole where a shot had come in, relying on the improbability of another entering at the same orifice. There was one corner of the framework splintered by several bullets; to it I crept, and held on despairingly.

Another flash from the battery. This time I could see the shell coming like a black speck in the sky. Anxiously I watched for the burst to come; but this time it came not, and the shell plunged into the sea fifty yards short, throwing up a mighty pillar of water, and ricochetting away far over my head. Was the fuze blind? I asked myself. No; there was another flash and another rush through the air, and sullen plunge in the sea beyond the target. The shrapnel practice was over, and they were firing plugged shell.

Now or never was my time. I

climbed on to the woodwork, sprang to my feet, and waved my hands. From the shore I must have looked very like a picture of Andromeda chained to her rock. I was too late, however, to escape a shot. Once more the red flash spouted forth, and I heard the ominous rush coming nearer and nearer, till with a roar as of an express train it rushed past my head, carrying away with it the left-hand top corner of the target, and hurling it far into the sea beyond. The concussion seemed to tear my feet from under me, and I fell, striking my head against the framework. I had just sense enough left to prevent myself rolling into the sea. My last glance at the shore showed the flag hoisted half-mast high; and then I must have fainted away, for I remember no more till I found myself lying in my bed,

with the surgeon-major applying strong ammonia to my nostrils with marvellous effect. I have little more to tell. Watching the effect of the shot from the battery, they had seen me standing there, just too late to stop the gun being fired; had ceased the practice, and got a boat out without delay, though with a very faint hope of finding me alive. Of course the story was made a standing joke against me ever after, and I must own that I deserved it. Nevertheless, I have at least the satisfaction of considering that when we go forth again to fight the Russians or the Germans, or whatever other nation may elect to try with us a game of war on a large scale, I am never likely to be much nearer

'The straight and dreadful pass of death' than I was that day on the sands of Shoeburyness.

ANSWER TO THE SPECIAL DOUBLE ACROSTIC (No. XVI.)

1. R O M A N T I C I Z E R
2. I B E N E
3. G L O S S O P
4. H A L L O W E L L
5. T I N E Y

Explanatory Notes.—Light 1. 1 Chron. xxv. 4, 31. 2. Dr. Johnson's play, and its heroine. 3. Lord Howard of Glossop. 4. Present to Lord Nelson. 5. Cowper's hare Tiney: see Epitaph, &c.

Correct solutions to the above have been received from ARABA, C O M, and KANITBEKO, who thus become the winners of the three prizes, the total sum of which, 40*l.*, will be divided equally amongst them.

Will these three successful solvers send their names and addresses, for publication in the next number of *London Society*, to the Acrostic Editor, 188 Fleet-street, E.C., so that cheques may be forwarded to them?

Bon Gualtier, Mungo-Puss-Tory, and Shaftan failed in the last light only. Bon Gualtier gave 'Townley,' Mungo-Puss-Tory gave 'Toby,' and Shaftan gave 'Trelawney,' instead of 'Tiney.'

The Acrostics will for the present be discontinued in *London Society*; and their renewal at some future time, or a representation of the Sphinx in another phase, will greatly depend upon whether the taste for such things which prevails now will be of a lasting or of an ephemeral character.

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LONDON SOCIETY.

APRIL 1879.

THE RIDDLE OF THE RING.

A Roundabout Romance in Three Chapters.

BY W. W. FENN,

AUTHOR OF 'HALF-HOURS OF BLIND MAN'S HOLIDAY,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

'Too tight across the chest—I never can persuade these tailors that I am a broad-shouldered man. Well, it must be altered, and at once, too; for I've no time to spare, and I haven't a decent coat to my back. I'll walk round to Tripper with it on, and show him what an ass he is; that's the shortest plan.'

Such, and many more to the same effect, were the half-muttered musings of Mr. John Farley as, surveying in a long cheval-glass his tall well-knit figure, he put himself into various attitudes, whilst trying on a brand-new fashionably-cut frock-coat, buttoning and unbuttoning it several times, raising and extending his arms, swelling out his chest, and otherwise testing the fit and ease of the garment. We, chronicling this history, and peeping at him as he completes his toilet, can hardly confirm his assertion that he is driven hard for decent attire; for his handsomely-furnished apartments in Jermyn-street, opening one into the other, were strewn about in all directions with articles of wearing apparel, intermingled with a heterogeneous

mass of bachelor-like appurtenances, together with several large packing-cases, portmanteaus, and leather bags. Shooting-coats, morning-coats, dress-coats, lounging-coats, top-coats, waistcoats, indeed all sorts of coats, were to be seen in every direction—lying on the sofa, thrown upon chairs, bulging out from half-closed drawers, and hanging in the wide-open wardrobe; disorganised battalions of shoes, boots on and off trees, interspersed with skirmishing slippers, of varied and marvellous fashions, were likewise ranged in irregular array in several quarters of the dressing-room. There was a walking-stick or two in every available corner; two umbrellas on the floor, and one of wasp-like proportions lying straight across the centre table, alongside the glossiest of hats, on the edge of which rested the spotless gray-kid gloves that had just been taken out from the six-dozen pair cedar box which stood slantwise perilously near the inkstand, amidst books, papers, a vase of flowers, a bronze statuette, and paper-weight. Several cigar-boxes, one open, with the contents scattered over the sofa amongst some choice-patterned coloured shirts,

a pile of woollen socks, and cambric pocket-handkerchiefs crushed down under a dumb-bell, its fellow kicking about in dangerous proximity to a newly framed and glazed proof engraving of Frith's 'Derby Day,' standing against the wall; a French novel turned down open on an ivory-backed hair-brush; the contents of a gold-mounted dressing-case; bundles of Russian cigarettes; and the farther agglomeration of atoms there collected together, and distributed at random over the dressing-table, writing-table, and chimneypiece, —lent, as it were, the finishing touches to a scene of hopeless disorder, clearly indicating the reckless carelessness of the young good-looking proprietor.

Less scrupulous and more audible ejaculations followed his first remarks, as, after taking up his hat and gloves and umbrella, and going half-way down-stairs, he suddenly returned. Passing hastily from room to room, and searching eagerly amongst the chaotic elements above hinted at, he said aloud,

'What the deuce have I done with it? I could have sworn I put it down on my dressing-case! Everything is in such a precious mess, and I have no time to put things straight; and how on earth all this is to be packed by to-morrow night is beyond me!'

Then he tossed and tumbled one thing over another, making confusion worse confounded. At last, halting abruptly in a rush from one table to another, he clapped his hands upon the inner breast-pocket of his coat, saying,

'Ridiculous idiot that I am, why, I have got it in my pocket all the time, of course!' And he again strode down-stairs, and this time out into the street.

Judging from the leisurely manner in which he strolled along

the shady side of Pall Mall, we, watching him, should scarcely again feel inclined to indorse the assertion that he had no time to spare. He did not look as if he had vast matters of business to get through between this and to-morrow night. He would not have given a casual observer the least idea that there was a necessity for haste in his actions. Very deliberately, too, he walked into Mr. Tripper's, the well-known tailor's in Waterloo-place, and explained the error that artist had fallen into with regard to his manly proportions. With equal deliberation he then bent his steps in the direction of Trafalgar-square, after requesting that his coat might be sent for in the course of an hour, when he would have returned, he said, from executing a commission at Messrs. Mellish's, the jewellers in Cockspur-street. But, as he passed the University Club, he was seized upon by an old college chum, one Tom Boscombe, whom he had not seen for some time, and who held him in converse, and insisted on hearing all about his schemes for the future, over a glass of sherry and a biscuit at the club. Farley was not a whit less open to the charms of social intercourse now, on the eve of his departure for a fresh, but by no means first, start in life, and when his time was so precious, than he had ever been; and by degrees, under the influence of his friend's conversation, the Amontillado sherry, and a cigar, he forgot all about his commission at the jeweller's, and was only reminded even of his appointment about the coat at his lodgings when he at last idly essayed to button the vexatious garment.

'Walk back to Jermyn-street with me, like a good fellow,' he said to Boscombe; 'I must give this coat to my tailor to be altered:

he has been waiting there, poor devil, a couple of hours already, I expect ; so come along. I'll put on another ; we'll take a stroll in the Park ; then come back and have a quiet little dinner together at the Blue Posts, and talk further about those dear old days ; and the two friends, arm-in-arm, returned to Farley's abode.

In the hall was seated the tailor's workman, who rose respectfully as they entered.

'Afraid I've kept you rather long ; just come into my room, and I will give you the coat there,' said Farley, leading the way upstairs.

The young man followed, and after having carefully folded the troublesome coat, and put it into his bag, departed.

As the door closed on him, Boscombe observed,

'What a remarkably good-looking lad that was ! Did you notice him ?'

'No, indeed, I can't say I did ; he did not interest me. If it had been a milliner's apprentice instead of a tailor's, perhaps I might have had a keener eye for good looks.'

'Likely enough—no one doubts that ; but that young fellow, save for his short hair and man's dress, might be a milliner's messenger.'

'What a rum fellow you are, Boscombe ! What fancies you take, and how you do observe things ! Why, if you had not told me, I should not have noticed whether his face was as smooth as a Dutch cheese or bearded like the pard. There, that'll do ; I've got a coat on now in which I can breathe at any rate ; it is pretty nearly done for, but it will do for to-day—my last for a long while in the old country. Come away, and we'll see what's going on in the Drive this fine May day.'

As the friends sauntered along

towards Hyde Park, Boscombe, in resuming a conversation which had been interrupted by the return to Jermyn-street, said,

'Well, I am really very glad to have come across you, Jack, and to hear such a good account of your prospects. That old aunt of yours must be, not to speak disrespectfully, a regular trump, and you are a very fortunate fellow to get such an appointment.'

'Yes, indeed, I am,' replied Farley. 'And that is not all ; for she has decided to take my little sister Marion to live with her, when the child leaves school, as she will at the end of another year. In fact my aunt will make her her heiress ; which means a good deal, for the old lady is very rich.'

'Sister ? why, I never knew you had a sister !'

'Eh ? no ! didn't you ? O, dear, yes ; and very pretty she promises to be too. You know when my father died, she and I were simply left paupers ; and if his kind-hearted old sister hadn't taken care of us, the Union would have been—well, I may say that "Union" would have been our only strength. We owe everything to my aunt Scobell. She has made several efforts to start me in life, but somehow I have always managed to disappoint her. I tried your profession the law, I tried physic, she would not hear of the army ; and now I am going out, as I told you, to Quebec, to a really fine thing, which I think will *do*—at any rate it *must* ; for she has declared that if I don't stick to this, she'll throw me off for good and all ; so I mean to turn over a new leaf, and show, if possible, that I am not ungrateful. No,' he added, after a pause, 'I am not ungrateful ; it's my carelessness and want of fore-

thought that have got me into so many scrapes; and you know, "Evil is wrought by want of thought, as much as want of heart."

'This is all news to me,' said Boscombe; 'you never entered into these details before.'

'Didn't I? 'Pon my word, it's very likely; I don't remember what I tell, and what I don't; in fact it's very little, I'm afraid, that I do remember. But, yes, there is one thing that I remember now. Why, what an ass I was not to think of it before! I am as bad as ever! Why, of course you are the very man! My aunt is extremely crotchety; hates doctors and lawyers; but she asked me if I knew any one to whom she could apply in the event of her wanting good legal advice; a man's opinion, you know, and that sort of thing. I daresay she wants to make her will, and you may as well have the job as anyone else. Of course,' he went on, 'I'll write to her at once, and tell her all about you. I'm delighted, my dear fellow, at the chance of being able to do you a good turn.'

As may be gleaned, Mr. Boscombe was a solicitor. He had gone to his club to keep an appointment on business, and having transacted it to his satisfaction was quite willing (the afternoon being far advanced) to give up the rest of the day to his friend, especially as there now seemed a prospect of a good connection opening up out of the renewal of the old acquaintance.

So the friends dined together, and parted with renewed expressions of gratitude to the Fates for having brought them together so opportunely. It was not till past eleven o'clock that night that our careless young friend John Farley, for the first time, called to mind that he had not done quite all he

had intended that day; he had forgotten to take a diamond ring to Messrs. Mellish, which he had promised Mrs. Scobell to deposit with those jewellers for certain repairs, but the oversight did not spoil his night's rest. The following morning, however, whilst at breakfast, he suddenly remembered that he had left the jewel in its case in the breast-pocket of his over-tight frock-coat; and this discovery so completely interrupted his matutinal meal, that he sprang up, and, regardless of his personal appearance, walked straight off in his quilted lounging-jacket at an unusually rapid pace to Mr. Tripper's establishment. That temple of fashion was quite startled from its propriety by the unexpected appearance of a customer at so unseasonable an hour. Foreman and cutters came from their recesses to listen to what at least must be something very important.

'Valuable ring,' 'old family relic,' 'three diamonds,' 'red-leather case,' 'inner breast-pocket,' 'coat to be altered yesterday afternoon,' 'fetched by a young man'—what did it portend? Simply this—that unless the ring were in the pocket still, it was lost, or had been stolen. The unsewn garment was produced, and there was certainly no ring in the pocket. Walters, the young man, was sent for; he had not been at work since tea-time yesterday—'he was a lazy customer,' they said—but in a little while he appeared. He stoutly denied all knowledge of the ring; he had not set eyes on such a thing; and upon being pressed and threatened, he declared indignantly that the gentleman's rooms were in such a state of confusion that most likely the ring was there now; anybody might go and see that what he said was true.

There was no denying this possibility: Farley admitted that things were a little at sixes and sevens, because he was just going abroad. Then Mr. Tripper himself, naturally jealous of the reputation of his establishment, offered to return with Mr. Farley to his rooms, and aid him in a search, when probably they would find the missing article. But the moment Mr. Tripper saw the confusion he remonstrated:

‘Really, sir,’ he said, ‘you must excuse me, but I think it is a little hard you should so hastily assume dishonesty on the part of any of my people; it must surely be impossible for you to say positively, in the face of this disorder, that the ring was in the coat-pocket.’

‘Ah, well, you may think so,’ rejoined Farley, ‘but I could have sworn it was. To be sure, things are in a bit of a mess; but I took the greatest care to put that ring in safety. I don’t know where the deuce to look for it, and I would not lose it for any money.’

And all this while he was turning things over one upon another in his usual reckless style. Again Mr. Tripper remonstrated:

‘Pray, pray, sir,’ he said, ‘excuse me; let us be a little more methodical in our search;’ and so, by degrees, some order was restored. But after more than an hour’s diligent examination of every likely and unlikely place in which the ring might have been discovered, they were fain to give up their hunt as hopeless.

‘Well,’ said Farley, flinging himself into a chair, ‘I sail from Liverpool the day after to-morrow. I must leave this business in the hands of my friend, Mr. Boscombe: but I shall also give information of my loss at Scotland-yard; for I may tell you, Mr.

Tripper, that the safety of that ring is of vital moment to me.’

Mr. Tripper promised, of course, as far as he was concerned, that the investigation should be continued; but it was quite evident he had formed his own conclusions, and placed very little reliance on Mr. Farley’s memory, and consequently on his declaration as to where he remembered putting the ring.

‘That young gentleman,’ he muttered to himself, as he returned to his shop, ‘must often forget where his head is, I should think. I never knew such a happy-go-lucky blade.’

Now the truth was, that young Farley’s rich old aunt, to whom he was indebted for the Civil appointment he was about to enter upon at Quebec, had intrusted him with this valuable heirloom to take to her jewellers’ to be cleaned, on the occasion of his farewell visit to her, down at Dene Court, her place in Sussex. With many injunctions to be careful of it—for she well knew her nephew’s character—the old lady, in bidding him ‘good-bye,’ impressed upon him the value she set on this jewel. It was of very antique date and pattern, and descended to her through several generations of the Scobell family. The thought, therefore, of the dire disgrace he would get into with his aunt, together with the annoyance which he knew the loss of the ring would entail upon her, made him shrink from openly avowing his misfortune. His passage was taken, he could not delay his departure, and must leave town the next day; so he finally left everything in the hands of Boscombe, and by a desperate effort got ready and started for Canada at the appointed time.

In the fond hope that his friend might yet be able to restore the

ring to his aunt, John Farley, in writing to her the evening before he sailed, briefly explained that he had had the stupidity to mislay it, but that Mr. Boscombe (who, by the way, he said, would be the very person she required as a clear-headed man of business) knew all particulars, and would doubtless communicate with her speedily on the subject. As that gentleman, however, was never able to obtain any information at Scotland-yard or elsewhere, in spite of all exertions, he was fain to remain silent. He heard from Farley soon after his arrival in Canada; the young fellow was in sore distress at the angry and indignant tone which Mrs. Scobell had adopted with regard to the ring, and most voluminous was the correspondence that followed between the two friends. Still the ring was never heard of, and Mrs. Scobell was in too great dudgeon to open any communication with Mr. Boscombe. Yet she did not carry her indignation to the extent Farley feared she might, of altering her intentions with regard to his sister; and it was with much satisfaction that in about eighteen months after he was settled in Quebec, and getting on very well, he received a letter from his aunt, couched in the kindly tone of old times, stating that Marion Farley was now established with her, and was a great source of pleasure and comfort in the lonely life she led at Dene Court.

CHAPTER II.

At the foot of the northern slopes of the South Downs, and consequently on the borders of the luxuriant and beautiful weald of Sussex, just where its wealth of foliage and rich vegetation gives

way to the stunted herbage clothing these precipitous and chalky hills, and not far from the picturesque village of Poynings, stood the old-fashioned brick mansion known as Dene Court.

The place was peculiarly secluded; dreary to a degree it would doubtless have been pronounced by the visitors from Brighton, who from time to time may have peeped down upon the gray roof of the old house in their excursions to the overhanging Devil's Dyke. And, truth to tell, there might have been some reason in their criticism, for it was just one of those dwellings that in the winter-time, at all events, suggested the need of open house, and merry company to gather round the hospitable table, or sit in cheerful groups in front of blazing logs when the sports of the field were over.

As may be guessed, however, from the reference made to its occupant in the preceding chapter, such festivities were the last things likely to awaken the slumbering echoes of its old rooms. Scrupulously neat, prim, and precise, and at the first glance austere of countenance, was Mrs. Scobell. Advanced in age, although still hale and active, a widowhood of some forty years had revived in her many an old-maidish habit, which indeed her short and childless married life had never entirely repressed. A scarcely less genial guardian, perhaps, the Fates could hardly have found for the buoyant high-spirited girl, who had now, as we have been told, become an inmate of Dene Court.

Such a character as Marion Farley's was about the last in the world that Mrs. Scobell could have understood. She had a sort of traditional idea of what young ladies should be, and there-

fore never dreamed that the niece who owed everything to her could ever presume to vary from the standard which the old lady had set up. She expected all girls to be deferential and amenable to the dictates of their elders, and she had scarcely the wit, even after six months' close intimacy, to see that she was dealing with a far from faultless disposition. Whether Mrs. Scobell had any definite notions about her niece's future, beyond the fact that she intended her to inherit her property, we cannot divine; but certain it is, that for the present she considered that, so long as she required the undivided companionship and attention which her niece supplied, it must be rendered at any cost.

Notwithstanding the kindness and luxury which surrounded her, the stately gravity with which it was dispensed, the intense monotony and dulness of the life, the utter absence of society, and the peculiarly retired situation of the house, formed a painful contrast in Marion's mind with the life at the fashionable school in the neighbouring watering-place of Brighton, which she had so lately left. Nor was it therefore wonderful that six months under her aunt's roof sufficed to arouse in her a feeling of rebellion at the dependence to which she attributed the dreary monotony of her existence. Yet, not unmindful of, nor ungrateful for, what Mrs. Scobell had done for her, she had the true instinct of a lady, and never gave much outward evidence of the restless spirit at work within her, and this self-control that she exercised probably increased the suffering which her prison-like life entailed.

Beyond a periodical visit from a Brighton physician, and an occasional call from one or two

neighbours of Mrs. Scobell's own standing, age, and habits, and the clergyman and his wife, no one crossed the threshold of Dene Court from week's end to week's end; and a drive in a close-shut carriage now and then, to return these visits, constituted the most notable events in the household. Like the rest of young ladies educated at Brighton, Miss Marion Farley had been taught to ride, and frequently of course had joined those cavalcades of galloping beauties under the riding-master's escort, which are so prominent a feature of life at the fashionable resort, and during her long pupilage she had become intimately acquainted not only with the Cliff Parade, but with all the many picturesque rides across the Downs. Now, however, this healthful and spirit-stirring exercise was denied her, not from any objection on the part of Mrs. Scobell to the thing itself, nor from any difficulty in supplying her niece with a well-trained horse—for no money would have been spared on this head, any more than it would upon anything which the aunt, with her kind but narrow views, considered likely to conduce to the girl's welfare. But Marion could not ride entirely alone or with a groom only; hence, though the subject had been frequently discussed, it had always been abandoned as impracticable, until one day the old lady, seeming, contrary to her custom, to notice a slight dejection which Marion was unable to conceal, said, as if by inspiration,

'Why, my dear, it has been very foolish of us not to think of it before; but there would be no objection to your riding with a female servant, if such a creature could be found capable of managing a horse. There must be many a farmer's daughter in this neigh-

bourhood who can ride; and then there would be no objection to your going out with Peters the groom. We will think about it, and I will order inquiries to be made; of course I should take the woman regularly into my service, as your female "equerry in waiting;" and the old lady uttered a little titter at the neat turn she had given her sentence.

Marion caught with delight at the idea. But despite all the researches which were made at the surrounding farmhouses, the right person was not to be found. However, Mrs. Scobell became once more inspired, and suggested that possibly by advertising in a Brighton paper that town of equitation might supply the commodity required. So, after much confabulation and a great many abortive attempts at terse composition, the following advertisement was inserted in the *Brighton Chronicle*:

'Wanted, a respectable young woman capable of riding and managing horses. She will be expected to occupy the position of a domestic servant, but her duties will be confined to riding out with a young lady residing in a secluded part of the county. A groom will always be in attendance. Apply, with references, &c., to &c.'

For some weeks the advertisement produced no result. At last, however, came a letter from a certain Ann Brice, stating that she had, as the daughter of a riding-master, been accustomed to the management of horses, and that only in consequence of a domestic calamity had she been recently obliged to go into service. She felt perfectly competent, she said, to perform the duties required, and would be ready to take the situation as soon as the young lady wished.

The letter was well written and expressed. References to two job-masters at Brighton were sent to Mrs. Scobell; and in the course of a fortnight Ann Brice, a demure good-looking young woman of about five-and-twenty, supplied with a fitting hat and habit, was fully installed in the somewhat novel post assigned to her.

Two well-trained horses were purchased; and Peters the groom, mounted on a sturdy old nag, followed his young mistress and her companion in many an invigorating canter across the breezy Downs and through the winding lanes in the neighbourhood. Miss Farley was a bold and dashing horsewoman, with plenty of nerve, and she frequently gave her escort a good deal of hard work to keep up with her; for she soon discovered that, whatever might have been Ann Brice's antecedents, the girl was by no means a first-rate rider, and Marion would take a delight sometimes in showing off her superior prowess. Nevertheless she said nothing of this at home, fearing lest her aunt, in over-anxiety for her safety, might interdict this one great solace in her hitherto monotonous life.

The change which the spirit-stirring exercise wrought in her feelings was very marked, and she looked forward to her gallops with intense delight. They therefore began to compensate for much that she was undergoing; and, as the autumn and winter drew on, she used to add to her amusement by attending as a spectator the meets of the Sussex Fox Hounds or the Brighton Harriers, whenever they took place within a moderate distance.

The Devil's Dyke was a favourite rendezvous for the latter pack, and scarcely ever did Marion miss attending when the weather was favourable. The field on such

occasions was composed of a very motley crowd of horsemen ; for, as everybody knows, all Brighton, from 'prentice-boys to lords and ladies, now and then turn out to join in this the easiest kind of hunting to be found in the three kingdoms. Only occasionally is it that the quality of the sport induces anything like a real cross-country rider to give himself the trouble of following the hunt. Sometimes, however, you will see two or three well-mounted thorough-looking men, capable of going anywhere, indolently lounging about on the crests of the hills, watching the proceedings, but seldom deigning to do more than to take a burst after the dogs in the intervals of their cigars.

Marion used to hold aloof from any close contact with the hunt, and, like the sportsmen just mentioned, contented herself with watching it from the high points of vantage, so that not unfrequently she would be in close proximity to the idle lookers-on. Several times, doubtless, she would have found this proximity unfitting and unpleasant but for her escort in close attendance. The sober aspect of old Peters, who always kept well up, acted as an effectual safeguard against anything more than sidelong glances at her remarkable grace and beauty. A really pretty woman, with a lithe, youthful, yet well-rounded figure, small head, and delicate throat, perfectly well dressed in hat and habit, and who knows how to ride, never shows to greater advantage than on horseback, which is as much as to say that Miss Farley never looked better anywhere else ; and though her features might not have answered all the requirements of a sculptor, the bright brown eyes, piquant nose, pearly teeth peeping

out of the smiling, good-natured, yet firm mouth, and the chestnut hair coiled neatly under the tall hat, were sufficient to justify the looks of admiration by which she was met on all sides.

One day, whilst she was watching a smart run going on in a neighbouring hollow, the old horse on which the groom was mounted suddenly took it into his head to follow the music of the dogs, and after giving himself a good shake, and ominously pricking up his ears, he got the bit between his teeth, and fairly bolted, in spite of the man's efforts to hold him. The force of example affected Miss Farley's animal, who dashed off after the groom, and there seemed every probability of his rider becoming also an involuntary member of the field. As, however, Marion was perfectly at home, she managed before long to pull the animal up, and, putting him round, made him face the hill at a brisk gallop for her pleasure, as he had descended it for his own. She was regaining the crest where Ann Brice had prudently remained, when her quick eye observed a well-mounted sporting-looking man earnestly talking to her attendant. He withdrew as Miss Farley approached, and she caught the last words which he uttered to Ann Brice, as he rode away without turning his head, 'Remember, then, at six.'

After speaking of the runaway horses Marion said,

'That gentleman was talking to you ; what did he want ?'

'O miss, he only made some remark about the way you managed your horse, and asked me where you lived.'

'And did you tell him?' inquired Marion archly, and looking straight into the girl's face, who coloured and seemed confused.

‘Well, miss, no ; that is, you see—’

‘Yes, I see,’ interrupted Marion ; ‘you did, and it was very wrong.’

‘The truth is, miss, the gentleman was a visitor in the family where I last lived, and he used to talk to me sometimes ; and he said he had been watching us all the morning, but did not recognise me till just as your horse ran away. Don’t you think he is very handsome?’ the girl added, looking after him.

‘I don’t know, indeed ; I did not see ; indeed I did not look ;’ but Marion’s eyes now seemed very much inclined, if they dared, to make up for their negligence, for the latent love of admiration common to all pretty girls was not likely to have been repressed by a residence in Brighton, where the ‘language of the eye,’ perhaps, is as well understood as in any town in the world, and she had mastered its grammar during a long course of promenades on the cliff in the ranks of her school. Thus, although appearing to deprecate her companion’s want of caution, she nevertheless betrayed to the astute Ann Brice a considerable curiosity as to what more had passed about herself.

‘What did he mean,’ she said, ‘by “Remember, then, at six” ? Are you going to meet him ?’

‘Well, he did ask me, miss, to do so.’

‘O, well, if you know him, of course you can do as you please. But I would advise you not to let it come to my aunt’s ears, and mind you don’t tell him anything about me ; he can’t be interested in my affairs, and I shall not allow—’ But here she was interrupted by the return of Peters, somewhat hot and scared by the unwonted exertions of his unexpected gallop ; and as by this time the afternoon was drawing on,

and the hounds had long since gone far away, our riding-party turned their horses’ heads homewards, and soon after reached Dene Court.

As Marion was closing the window of her room, into which streamed a bright autumnal afternoon sun, she saw in the roadway skirting the house the form of a horseman slowly passing along. He was looking up at her window, and, recognising him at once as her attendant’s acquaintance, she could hardly refrain from an injudicious and highly reprehensible smile as she suddenly drew down the blind. Of course this young lady’s behaviour cannot be defended ; but we believe, bearing well in mind all the circumstances of her life, her disposition, the locality in which she had been educated, and the dreary monotony of her existence, we shall not find it singular, and that most young ladies of her coquettish character similarly situated might have been tempted to the same indiscretion. However this may be, it is certain that thenceforward there was a visible improvement in her spirits, and she not unfrequently seemed to annoy her aunt by a too vehement display of their exuberance.

John Farley had been absent about two years when this stage of affairs was reached. He wrote just sufficiently often to let his aunt and sister know of his welfare, but, being naturally averse to penmanship, his letters were very laconic, and, beyond a few expressions of gratitude, contained nothing of any moment. The unlucky subject of the ring was now never touched upon ; Marion, as will be remembered, was at school when the circumstances connected with it happened, and John Farley easily divined from her letters that his aunt had not told his sister anything about his

misfortune. Hence he too was silent on the subject.

One evening, just before dinner, Marion was in one of those peculiarly high-spirited moods which had lately overtaken her, and had evidently bestowed the greatest care on her toilette, which, together with a new fashion she had adopted of wearing her hair, became her exceedingly. She was in the drawing-room, at the piano, and rattling off with great brilliancy a succession of the gayest and liveliest waltzes, when her aunt entered, stopping her ears.

'Marion, Marion,' she exclaimed, 'how loud you are playing! You know I do not like that sort of music. Leave off, pray leave off! And dear me, girl, what have you been doing to your head? you are for ever now twisting and twirling your hair into the most fantastic forms. I am sure Miss Sykes would never have allowed you to disfigure yourself so, and why you should—'

'My dear aunt, you are quite mistaken; Miss Sykes used to let us dress our hair just as we pleased, and I have grown tired of wearing it plastered down flat to my head like a Quakeress.'

'Indeed, you might imitate worse models than Quakeresses; and, for my part, I think young ladies would do well always to attend rather to what pleases their elders than themselves; and you know I have said quite enough from time to time for you to understand that I prefer your hair dressed in a more modest and quiet style. Pray don't let me see you come down again such a figure.'

Mrs. Scobell, having put on her spectacles the better to examine the disputed *coiffure*, had now walked close up to the piano, just as Marion, biting her lip with vexation at the reprimand, was

lightly passing her taper fingers over her much-elevated roll of hair. She was about to make some farther injudicious remark, when the old lady, with a sudden gesture of surprise, seized Marion's much-bejewelled hand, exclaiming with a vehemence quite unnatural to her,

'Why, where did you get that ring? I never gave it you; tell me instantly where you got it. Why, it is the ring that John said he had lost,—the ring of all others that I most prize, and that he professed to have left in a coat-pocket! Tell me quickly, did he give it you? and if not he, who? Take it off immediately; it belongs to me. I would not lose it for the world. Give it to me, child, this moment, and tell me where you got it. Why don't you speak? Why don't you answer?' And, without waiting for Marion to reply, she began to twist and screw at the finger until she had succeeded in getting the ring off, and in holding it in her now trembling hands close to the lamp. Still speaking very fast, and as if to herself, she went on:

'Yes, yes; of course it is the same. I should know it amongst a thousand. What can all this mean? Have I been duped, robbed, by that ungrateful boy? and has his sister the face to flaunt his petty thievings under my very eyes? Am I in a dream? Am I going—?' And, her excitement completely overcoming her, she tottered back a step or two, and sank fainting into an arm-chair, just as Marion, bewildered and pale, hastened to her and rang the bell for assistance.

CHAPTER III.

Not very suggestive of romance is that lawyer's private room in

Gray's-inn, where Mr. Boscombe sits writing a long letter; yet if we look over his shoulder, we may find some interest in its concluding passages. He is saying:

'This is to be an epistle of wonders, my dear Jack; for whilst writing this, I have received a letter from whom, do you think? Why, your aunt Scobell! In the first blush of the thing I can hardly understand it, and, of course, shall go down immediately; I cannot but think she is labouring under some absurd mistake. This is what she says:

"Dene Court, May 5, 1865.

"Sir,—My nephew mentioned you to me as a shrewd man of business, and a great friend of his. You have now an opportunity of proving yourself both these. Shrewd you will certainly have to be, and if you can exculpate *him*, there will be no doubt about your friendship. I am aware that you are acquainted with the circumstances attending the loss by my nephew of a ring belonging to me, intrusted to his charge. This being so, perhaps you will be able, in his absence, to explain how I come to find that ring on the finger of my niece, his sister. I am prepared to give you every opportunity of elucidating the mystery. As the shortest way to this, I propose that you should come down here at your earliest convenience. I abstain from all comment upon the unpleasant and highly suspicious means by which I have recovered my property; for the young lady refuses to give me any account of how the ring came into her possession. I merely appeal to you, as the only person acquainted with my nephew of whom mention has been made to me, and who is likely to afford me advice and assistance in this disagree-

able matter.—I remain, sir, yours truly,
MARY SCOBELL."

'Thus writes the old lady, and I can tell you nothing more, of course, until I have been down. Nevertheless I shall post this at once, as there is a mail to Canada to-night. Meanwhile make your mind easy, and rely on the shrewdness and friendship of yours,

'TOM BOSCOMBE.'

The next morning Mr. Boscombe arrived at Dene Court, in which secluded mansion he spent several days. On his return to town, he sat down immediately to his desk, and we will again look over his shoulder at what he writes:

'I have just returned from Dene Court, my dear Jack, and hasten to give you full particulars.

'It is really a very curious affair. Your aunt received me with chilling politeness, and, after giving me a few details as to how she caught sight of the ring on your sister's finger, said, "The shock it gave me quite affected my nerves. I questioned Marion closely. She endeavoured to evade my inquiries by every species of subterfuge; but as this is certainly the ring John took with him to London, and which he professed to have lost, I refused to accept any of my niece's evasive answers; indeed, so evasive were they, and finally so determined did she seem not to tell me whence she got the trinket, that I could but come to one conclusion, distressing though it was, viz. that there had been collusion between brother and sister, and that his account of his loss was simply a gross falsehood. As John's friend, I can only leave the affair in your hands."

'I assured the old lady that I had no doubt in the end, at any rate, of being able to clear you,

my dear Jack, from the aspersion she, in her indignation, cast upon you. Then I begged to see Miss Farley alone, and I had a long interview with her; but beyond discovering that she was the most charming girl I ever saw, I might as well have remained in London. She stoutly refused to tell me a word about how she got the ring. I entreated, cajoled, and finally threatened, with a touch of professional badgering: nothing moved her. At last I said,

"Well, Miss Farley, I give you half an hour to think over my words; at the end of that time, if you still refuse, you must take the consequences."

'I rose and walked to the door. As I laid my hand upon it, there was a knock outside; on opening it, a young woman, looking like a lady's-maid, drew aside to let me pass. Her face struck me as not unfamiliar; but as it was of a type of beauty that one often sees, this was not wonderful. Still, it puzzled and perplexed me. I went straight to Mrs. Scobell, told her what had passed, and then asked various questions concerning the servants in the house, and especially about the young woman I had just met.

"O, that was Ann Brice," said your aunt.'

Boscombe's letter then explained what Mrs. Scobell told him about the riding companion, and with which we are already acquainted. The writer continued:

'At the expiration of half an hour, Mrs. Scobell returned with me to your sister for her reply. In crossing the hall, we found her unexpectedly dressed in her riding-habit. As her aunt was expressing surprise at this, and peremptorily ordering her not to go out, I turned towards the door where the horses were standing,

and came face to face with this Ann Brice, attired in hat and habit. Then, in an instant, all my perplexity about her face vanished; the whole thing was clear to me, and, for the first time, I saw a clue to the mystery. The semi-masculine dress, with its tight-fitting body and high collar, together with the man's hat, revealed her to me in her true light at a glance; and in Ann Brice, the female equerry in waiting, I at once recognised the tailor's apprentice that took your coat away from Jermyn-street, and on whose feminine looks I had then commented. She evidently did not know me; so acting promptly, I said:

"Will you let me speak a word with you? Just come into this room for a minute;" and seeing me enter a little study giving upon the hall, she followed me with an air of surprise, and without the least hesitation.

"Now," I said, when I had closed the door, and had whispered a word of explanation to Mrs. Scobell, "we will have no beating about the bush, but come to the point at once. You stole a ring from the pocket of a coat, when, nearly three years ago, you passed for a tailor's apprentice in the employ of Mr. Tripper. Nay, don't deny it; that ring has been found on Miss Farley's finger. If she had simply bought it of you, she would have said so at once, and I should have contented myself with giving you into custody; as it is, she refuses to give any account of how she came by it. Why does she do this? *You know*; so come, make a full confession, and we will condone your part in the affair, because my chief object, since the property has been recovered, is to protect the young lady from some scheme of which you are the instrument. Explain all at once, or you will find your-

self in Lewes Gaol in the twinkling of an eye."

'Utterly taken aback by the suddenness of my accusation, she nevertheless put a bold face on it, and denied any knowledge of what I meant.

"Very well," I said, "do as you please; but you will not leave this room except in custody, unless you accede to my commands. I know more of you, you see, than you suspect."

'With this, I walked out of the room, which was a small one, having but a single window high up, and locked the door behind me. Miss Farley had gone back to her room, and the horses had been sent away.

"Let some one, my dear madam," I said, as soon as I had rejoined Mrs. Scobell in the drawing-room, "ride off at once for the nearest constable; I shall have to give Ann Brice into his charge."

'Then I explained who it was I had discovered in her niece's female equerry.

"My identification of her," I continued, "as the tailor's apprentice accounts at once for the ring being in this house, and so far, I think you will admit, thoroughly exculpates my friend John. We have only now to find out why Miss Farley is so silent about it, and this we shall easily do, if we are driven to it, by searching her desk, or any place she keeps studiously locked. Meanwhile, may I ring the bell?"

'The old lady begged I would give my own orders, and act as I thought best. A servant entered, and after telling him what to do, and when he had left the room, I said to Mrs. Scobell,

"Go to your niece, tell her what has transpired about Ann Brice, and once more entreat her to be open with you. If she still refuses, we must do as I said."

'I now retired to the room which had been set apart for me, and which partially overlooked the stables, and, at a little distance, a side-gate to them leading into a by-lane.

'I sat down at the window, and began to muse over the strangeness of my position, and the coincidences which had led to it. I had so remained, perhaps, half an hour, when I saw a stable-lad gently leading a horse through the gate I have just mentioned. After quietly shutting it, he mounted and rode slowly away; then he broke into a brisk trot; but where the road began to turn he put his horse at a low hedge, leaped over it, and, plunging into a thicket at the brow of a hill, was lost to view.

"My messenger at last!" I thought. "I was in hopes he had started long ago;" and I continued my musing. Presently my attention was again aroused by the sound of horses' hoofs, and, looking up, I saw a riderless steed coming briskly along the lane towards the stable-door, with his bridle hanging loose. The beast stopped on reaching the gate, and whinnied for admission.

"My messenger has been thrown," I thought; and as there was not a creature about, I ran down-stairs, called the butler, and told him about the loose horse.

"I am afraid the boy you sent after the constable has been thrown," I added.

"Boy, sir!" said the man; "it were Mr. Peters the groom I sent, sir."

"Whoever you sent, his horse has come back without him. Let us go and see about it."

'The man led the way to the stable-yard, and was going to the principal gates, when I cried,

"The horse is at the door in the lane!"

"Why, what can that mean?" said the man, surprised. "Mr. Peters did not go that way; no one ever goes out there." And when the animal, shaking his head, trotted briskly in, the man appeared quite bewildered.

"Why, bless me," he exclaimed, "this is Miss Farley's horse! I hope the young lady has not been thrown!"

"Miss Farley usually rides on a lady's saddle, I should think," said I; "she has not been riding on this."

"No, of course not, sir; but, then, who has? I must call Williams."

He led the horse to the stable, where I followed him. The first thing that met my eyes was a hat and habit. In a moment a thought flashed across me, and I rushed back to the house, unlocked the door of the study in which I had secured my prisoner, and found the window open and the room empty!

'Scarcely had I realised the fact that Ann Brice had made her escape in a stable-boy's dress, than I was summoned to Mrs. Scobell; and after we had both expressed our regret at this catastrophe, she said:

"I have acted as you desired, Mr. Boscombe, and taken possession of this little desk belonging to my niece. I requested her to give me the key, after briefly telling her of the discovery you had made; and upon her positive refusal, I simply walked away from her room with it under my arm. And as it is the only receptacle she keeps scrupulously locked, I have no doubt that its contents will throw light on this affair, and I beg that you will immediately break it open."

"It is a very unpleasant office," I answered, "but it must be done, and here now, without any assistance from the servants, as we

must on no account let them suppose that what is going on has any concern with the young lady."

'I easily prised open the slight lock with a pair of strong scissors, and amongst a quantity of feminine trifles came upon several bundles of letters, tied with blue ribbon. They were all undirected, but on each envelope, in Miss Farley's handwriting, was a date, undoubtedly that on which each note had been received.

"As she is so methodical," I said, "so will we be; you shall look at them, Mrs. Scobell, in rotation."

'Well, my dear Jack, you can guess that they were love-letters, beginning with an earnest request for meetings; then showing that meetings had taken place, and the latter ones pointing to the advisability of an elopement. Very many marked and anxious inquiries ran through this latter part of the correspondence—as to the young lady's ways and means, and especially as to what amount of ready money, jewelry, &c., she could lay her hands on for travelling purposes. Of course the expressions of admiration, adoration, and devotion grew warmer and warmer, whilst constant reference was made to the services of "our faithful ally Ann."

'When the old lady had made me acquainted with the main purport of the letters, I examined one myself. It, with the rest, only bore the signature "Jamie," and was neither dated nor addressed; but the handwriting? That was not strange to me, I felt certain the instant I looked at it. Yet where had I seen it? Whose was it? It was a very characteristic one, and I had seen it before, I could swear. I endeavoured to recall my experiences of caligraphy, and in a minute or two I remembered a certain for-

gery case, in which, about four years ago, I was attorney for the prosecution, and in which the accused only escaped by the skin of his teeth. Yes, and this was the handwriting of that same accused—an adventurer with the shadiest of characters, a fellow known about town as James Snow, a good-looking, flashy, betting man, with a big black beard; they used to call him "Black Snow." I had then to compare and narrowly examine lots of his handwriting, and here was some more of it, not a doubt!

'I told your aunt my suspicion, my certainty, and said:

"This attempt to entrap your niece into an elopement is simply another of the many rascalities incidental to his career. Ann Brice is a female accomplice, a conclusion which her aptitude for disguise and our previous acquaintance with her confirm.

"With this clue, Mrs. Scobell," I went on, "I shall have no difficulty in ferreting out this scoundrel, but, for the sake of your niece's reputation, I would advise that we do not prosecute. He will keep clear of Dene Court as soon as he hears from his accomplice that his little game is up; no doubt she is gone to join him. You have recovered your ring, and all that now seems to me necessary is to convince Miss Farley of the lucky escape she has had. Surely, when she is brought to understand this, contrition will replace obstinacy."

'And now, my dear Jack, if I only had the pen of a good novelist instead of that of a mere matter-of-fact lawyer, I would describe in detail what followed. As it is, I can only say that when at length your sister came into the drawing-room, I never saw a more obstinate young lady, nor,

when she left it, one more penitent. I showed her the exact state of affairs, what we had discovered, and how, if she compelled us, we should have to send her *innamorato* into penal servitude, as the safest means of putting her and her prospects beyond his reach. Then the old lady talked to her in quite an altered and affectionate tone, and between us, in a very little while, we brought her to tears; nay, before the interview was over she expressed great shame at having allowed herself to fall into such a vulgar trap, declaring that she had really behaved as she had out of thoughtless frolic and a desire for amusement.

"As to falling in love with the creature," she said indignantly, "I had no feeling of the kind. I kept his letters for fun, and I accepted the ring for fun. He only gave it to me the same afternoon that you discovered it, aunt; only I didn't like being made to tell, and I was determined I would not; and now I am very sorry—and let me burn those horrid letters at once."

'With this she seized the letters and threw them on the fire; but I kept a portion of one as a specimen of the handwriting.

'Anything like the gratitude of your aunt for my management of this delicate business I never saw; the old lady shed tears of delight.

"Perhaps, Mr. Boscombe," she said, "I have been a little selfish, and forgetful that this must be a dull house for a young high-spirited girl. I must try and make her life a little more lively, and have people to see me; and I beg that you will often come down and give me the Saturday to Monday visit that you business-men are so fond of; and let it be soon, Mr. Boscombe, please, for I have some more family business that I

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should like to put into your hands."

'So, my dear Jack, you may be sure I shall go down again next week.'

Then the letter ended with the usual friendly commonplaces.

The promise to make her house a more suitable abode for her niece was faithfully kept by Mrs. Scobell, and the going and coming of carriages, and the numerous little dinner-parties, and even a dance, which in time succeeded Mr. Boscombe's first visits to Dene Court, culminated the following autumn in a festival which created quite a furore in the neighbourhood. Such a grand wedding did not often take place in that rural district. Everything conspired to the success of the occasion: never had the sun shone brighter upon a bride; the bells of the old church at Poynings had never sounded a merrier peal; and a happier pair than Tom Boscombe, and Marion his wife, had never departed on their honeymoon.

Full accounts of these proceedings, and what had led to them, reached John Farley, of course, from the pen of his faithful friend and brother; but it was more than a year after his marriage before any letter was despatched to Canada which it concerns us again to take a glance at over the shoulder of its writer. It plunged at once into the main subject:

'I should not have written again so immediately, my dear Jack, were it not that a funny thing has just happened. I was sent for the other day to defend a man calling himself James Capper, who had got into a scrape for horse-chaunting; a nice reputable case, you'll say; but matrimony is an expensive amusement,

and I can't afford to turn my back upon business, criminal or otherwise—and who do you think he turned out to be? Why, my old friend Jim Snow, the forger and also the writer of the love-letters to your sister; the eminent adventurer, friend, and accomplice of Mistress Ann Brice. Yes, here he was in trouble again, and asking me this time to defend him. The confidences passing between a prisoner and his attorney are sacred; but I don't mind telling you that when I had mastered his present case, and settled with him our line of defence, I said: "Now come, for my satisfaction, just tell me about that job of the ring; how did you get it from Ann Brice, to give to that young lady down at Dene Court? What was your connection with her riding-woman, formerly the tailor's apprentice?"

'He was completely staggered, and did not attempt to deny his identity; but when he realised the situation he treated it as a joke.

"Well, upon my life," he said, laughing, "this is a queer whirling of affairs! To think of my sending for you of all men, and after you'd once been against me too! And it was you, was it, that scared poor little sis out of her wits, and made her nearly break her neck by jumping out of that window in her habit?"

"Little sis? Do you mean Ann Brice?"

"Yes, she is a young sister of mine; Ann Brice is only an alias, one of many. But it seems to me you want to know too much," he went on after a pause; "but I suppose I must oblige you. It lies in a nutshell. Our father was a trainer at Malton in Yorkshire: he got into trouble when we were young 'uns, and we were left to our own devices: they were numerous and ingenious, for we were pretty

fly, and up to a thing or two. I took to the turf, and haven't done badly on the whole; I have always lived like a gentleman, only I've had bad luck lately. I kept sissy quite straight for a long time; then—well, excuse details; but she was always nimble with her fingers, and I thought the tailoring trade would suit her; and as she had to make herself scarce and useful, I sent her to London in disguise; and, as she was a girl of resources, she turned her boyish looks to good account, got engaged as a sewer to the celebrated Tripper (he has made togs for me in his time), and there she found the ring, and sent it to me by letter the same afternoon. I was down at Newmarket and rather flush just then; so I sent her a fiver for it, put it aside, and thought no more about it. Later on, business of a pressing nature called me to Brighton, and just about then sissy thought it better to resume her petticoats and give up the tailoring; so she joined me there. Well, one day, she caught sight of a queer advertisement, which you have probably heard of, as you seem to know so much, and we thought it promised an opening. As a little 'un she had been pretty good at riding; so—but you know what followed."

"Yes; but the ring?" I inquired.

"O, when sis put me up to that uncommonly handsome young heiress, and whilst I was carrying on the game,—though with a deal of difficulty, I must confess, she was so very coy,—I happened in overhauling my effects to come across the bauble. I had forgotten I had it, for I was still very flush. I thought it would make a pretty present and inspire confidence; and be hanged to my stupidity! for it was just this that blew the whole gaff!"

"But didn't Ann caution you?"

"Bless your heart, she didn't know I'd kept the ring; didn't know it myself. We had forgotten all about it, and I never inquired where sis found it; that only came out afterwards when it all came out."

"And didn't she know that you had given the ring to the young lady?"

"Of course not. We used to stroll in the lanes together, and sis picked gooseberries; that's the polite term, I think."

"And she didn't remember that the young lady's name was the same as that of the gentleman who had lost the ring three years ago?"

"No, she did not; and that was her great blunder. Who would have ever thought of things working round to that?"

"Then Miss Brice must have been rather astonished to hear where it had turned up?"

"Yes, she was, and could not make it out at first; but when you locked her into the room she had time to put two and two together, jumped to her conclusions, and out of the window. She saw it was her only chance of getting clear and putting me up to what had happened. And so, as I say, being a girl of resources, she doffed her habit and hat, borrowed the stable-boy's jacket and cap hanging up in a stall, saddled the steed, made him carry her to within a quarter of a mile of the railway, shook him loose, and came to me at Brighton, which eligible locality we thought it prudent to vacate. Ah," added this good-looking scamp, with a sigh, as he stroked his now shaven cheeks, "it was a great pity; a beautiful game spoiled, all through my not converting that jewel when I first got it; but accidents will happen, &c."

"And your devoted Ann?" I inquired.

"Ah, poor child," he answered, "she went to Australia more than a year ago. I was sorry to lose her; but it was the wisest course. Do you want to know any more?"

"No, no," I answered; "that's enough. I understand. Good-morning;" and I left him in Cold-bath Fields, where he was confined on remand.

'And mightily glad I was, my dear Jack, be sure, to find that the scoundrel had no suspicions of the present position of the young heiress. I don't think he is likely to get clear of his present

trouble, however well I conduct his case; and though it may seem a little ungrateful, considering how much I owe to him, I sha'n't be sorry if he gets put into safe keeping for a lengthened period.'

Though the farther correspondence between Boscombe and Farley entered into many details concerning the discovery of this Riddle of the Ring, and the way in which it had linked the two families together, we are in no way concerned in them, beyond knowing that the alliance has turned out one of the very happiest that the whirligig of trifling events could possibly bring about.

MEMORIES OF HIGHGATE.

Not many years have elapsed since the pleasant village of Highgate was sufficiently isolated to be considered in the country. Hedges bounded green fields on the slopes, where in the summer-time children disported themselves among the fresh grass, gathering buttercups and primroses, and returned to their homes in dark courts and alleys with bright nosegays and daisy-chains, after having inhaled the pure breezes and enjoyed a few hours of pleasure in these suburban meadows. Cows belonging to one or two dairy-farms browsed peacefully on the lower ground, and supplied with wholesome milk the outlying parts of the great city, which was soon to make encroachments in that direction. Russell-square was built, Tavistock-square just completed, Coram-street (named after the benevolent Captain Coram, who established the Foundling Hospital) was in course of completion, and a few other streets were beginning to straggle farther north. Kentish Town was evidently slowly approaching London. Some old-fashioned red-brick houses with large gardens were inhabited by wealthy citizens, who could from thence easily reach their houses of business, and return to rural quietude. A wide expanse of meadow-land remained between these houses and Mother Red-Cap, then a wayside public-house at the junction of the roads leading from Tottenham-court-road to Highgate, Hampstead, and Holloway. The Regent's Park had been enclosed, and the various handsome terraces commenced;

but the approach to it by Park-street—then only an unmade road—was a quagmire in winter from the heavy clay, and equally difficult to pass through in summer from the deep ruts. As an illustration of the still pastoral state of the district, a story is told of an old woman, who, having set out for a summer evening's walk from a court in Holborn to Kentish Town, finding herself beyond the precincts of houses, and surrounded by fields and trees, turned back in disgust, saying, 'It was so cold and *melancholic like*, that she would never walk there again.'

A gentleman, scarcely an octogenarian, describes the Regent's Park as having been a series of fields with hedges and stiles, which he often crossed as a boy on his way to and from an old-fashioned villa in St. John's Wood. On the site of the present Botanical Gardens was a small farmhouse with its dairy and cow-sheds, where people resorted to drink new milk, and to partake of curds-and-whey. Until recently, one of the original farmsheds remained. It had been converted into a toolhouse, the dairy having in turn given way to the nursery of the celebrated florist Jenkins. He was much employed by people of distinction to lay out their grounds, and on one occasion was accompanied by his nephew, a good-looking young man, who was to be employed to superintend some improvements in the gardens at Leslie, the beautiful seat of the Earls of Rothes in Fifeshire. The young countess, heiress in her own right of the fair domain, took a

liking to the young man. She married him privately, and eloped from Leslie to the humble abode of Jenkins, a small rustic cottage covered with flowering creepers, in the midst of the beautiful flower-garden. Beneath this roof several of her children were born; and doubtless the young countess here enjoyed as much real happiness as in her ancestral home, to which, in the course of years, she and her husband returned.

On the ascent of Highgate Hill, on the Kentish Town side, and at the entrance of Millfield-lane, stands the pretty villa once the residence of Charles Mathews, the celebrated comedian. It had been previously inhabited by the Polish dwarf, who made a considerable fortune by exhibiting himself. Laughable stories were told of his domestic history; among others, that having married a lady of somewhat gigantic stature, who took the little count and his money into safe-keeping, she would, if offended, place him on a mantel-piece, from which, being fat in proportion to his height, he was unable to descend, and where he would sometimes remain for hours, until it suited his irate partner to release him.

Higher up the steep hill, until of late years, the view was still rural; only one or two villas existed, surrounded by shrubs and flower-gardens. In one of these—which is now removed—lived Fauntleroy the banker, whence he was taken to Newgate for forgery, and there hanged. On the right, embosomed in trees and unseen from the road, stands the villa, Holly Lodge, in which lived and died the well-known actress, Miss Mellon, afterwards Mrs. Coutts, and finally Duchess of St. Albans.

On the summit of the hill commence the fine old mansions of

the nobility and gentry of a much earlier period. To the left is a line of stately trees overshadowing some detached old red-brick houses, and called 'The Grove.' In one of these lived the poet Coleridge, with his devoted friends Mr. and Mrs. Gilman. Many persons are still living who remember him shuffling along this his favourite walk; his slouching figure, heavy but amiable countenance, and gray meditative eyes, which seemed to look beyond, and not on, the things of this earth. The merriment of the young, however, would recall him from his reveries. The Grove was then the favourite resort of nursemaids and children; and nothing would please the kindly old man more than to gaze on the sports of the little 'kingdom-of-heavenites,' as he was wont to call them, or, gently holding a little girl by the plaits of hair (then in fashion), discourse to her high art and philosophic thoughts, oblivious that he had occasioned a general dispersion of the various groups, who, concealed behind the trees, tittered with amusement at the metaphysical poet and his unwilling listener.

Passing other old-fashioned mansions, the former occupants of which are unknown to fame, we come to some handsome old iron gates, and a broad gravel road which leads up to the modern church of St. Michael. It is built on the site of the fine old Mansion House, which was of stately proportions. Here many can remember a flight of marble steps and a fine massive oaken door, which opened into a noble and lofty panelled hall. A broad staircase, also of oak, with richly-carved balustrades, ended on a spacious landing, from which opened the lofty reception-rooms, hung with rich tapestry, faded and tat-

tered by the lapse of years. This house, it was said, had belonged to an old Derbyshire family, in which the baronetcy was extinct, the heirs were unknown, and the property had fallen into Chancery. The extensive gardens at the back sloped down the hill, and possessed an historical interest in consequence of a tradition that, from this commanding position, the principal conspirators in the Gunpowder Plot assembled to witness the blowing up of the Houses of Parliament, and stood either under a clump of firs, or the fine cedar now overshadowing the mansions of the dead. The house was latterly let for a boys' school, and the pleasure-grounds now form part of the Highgate Cemetery.

Not far from thence, and passing what were unsightly ponds, which the hand of modern improvement has converted into two little shrubberies, we come to the site of the old red-brick church built in the reign of Queen Elizabeth by Sir Roger Cholmley. The ground is now occupied by a memorial church; it was erected by a family residing in Highgate, and devoted to the use of the boys in Highgate Grammar-school, an establishment now becoming celebrated under the superintendence of the head-master, Dr. Dyne. The founder, Sir Roger Cholmley, had become Chief Justice in 1562, and obtained from Grindal, Archbishop of Canterbury, the grant of an old chapel dedicated to St. Michael, which had succeeded the cell of a hermit. In addition to building a church he endowed a grammar-school for the education of forty boys, and directed that a sum of money should be devoted to the support of a certain number of poor people. For these purposes he left a two-acre field, a garden and orchard, also a house

for the master, who was to be a graduate of one of the universities. Moreover, the governors appointed by Sir Roger received a specific set of regulations for their own guidance, and that of their successors, to carry out in perpetuity his benevolent plans. In time, however, the number of scholars diminished, and also that of the poor recipients of Sir Roger's bounty, and it ceased to be the duty of the clergyman, who resided in the parsonage—which abutted on the church—to instruct the boys. This was confided to a person who performed, in addition, the various offices of pew-opener, bell-ringer, and sexton. He seemed to think that his educational duties consisted principally in birching the boys well on weekdays; and on Sundays, when he had marshalled the little urchins to church and to their places around the communion-table, he would take his seat opposite to them on a high stool, armed with a very long cane, long enough to reach the head of the most distant offenders. Woe to any little giggler or whisperer who, tired with the monotony of the sermons, ventured on the sly to play cat's cradle, or, for the edification of his neighbour, to exhibit the contents of his pockets. The moment the eye of the master caught sight of the delinquent he would receive such audible raps upon the head as would resound through the whole church, and excite the risible faculties of many of the congregation; notwithstanding the suppressed sobs of the culprit and the consternation of the other restless little beings, each of whom would probably receive a similar castigation before the welcome moment of dismissal.

At this period Highgate was chiefly inhabited by substantial merchants, lawyers, and the upper

class of tradesmen, and the management of the charity had fallen principally into the hands of the latter. No one had thought of interfering with these governors, although the ancient church was falling into decay. Nevertheless, many complaints were made concerning the old church-clock, which kept time according to its own fashion, in spite of the worthy sexton's endeavours to set it right. At last the clergyman, the Rev. Mr. —, undertook to lay the matter before the board of governors, who appointed one of the most influential of their body to investigate the matter. He was a Mr. A., who had made a large fortune as a *sweep-washer* (a business which consists in washing the sweepings of gold- and silver-smiths' shops or workrooms), and who boasted 'that he had got on well without *edication*.' His round little figure tightly buttoned up, and his very red face, were painfully suggestive of a considerable amount of compression which might prove dangerous at any moment. On the day fixed this Mr. A. sat in council with the clergyman and sexton, and after hearing their complaints about the rebellious clock, indignantly declared 'that the governors would never no more go to any expense about it, as only two years *afore* it had been thoroughly *wamped up*.'

This state of affairs, which had lasted so many years, was about to terminate abruptly. A new inhabitant, a wealthy jeweller and silversmith, Mr. G., came with his family to enjoy the salubrious air of Highgate. He had much leisure time, and, according to his own account, his love of antiquarian research led him to examine the charter and the statutes of Sir R. Cholmley's charity. Of the greatly increased revenues since his time little in-

formation could be obtained, but it was quite clear that they ought to be employed to place the mere village school on a footing to benefit the neighbourhood—indeed, to be a first-class institution. Then began the great controversy between Mr. G. and the governors of the charity. He found many partisans both in Highgate and elsewhere. After a protracted struggle the antiquarian silversmith and his party triumphed; the result being the establishment of a school with such ample endowments as would carry out the intentions of the founder, and be in accordance with the requirements of modern times.

Passing through the straggling village, we reach what is called 'The Bank,' an elevated spot on the summit of the hill overlooking the road, which must have been considerably lowered at some former period, but is still somewhat steep. Upon this ascent, it is said, stood the mansion of the Earl of Arundel, every vestige of which has disappeared. Large parties of distinguished guests were wont to assemble at his hospitable board. King James I. was a visitor for the purpose of hunting in the adjoining woods; and it is said that the unfortunate Arabella Stuart fled thither to seek protection of the earl from the persecutions of the king on account of her marriage. In 1626 the great Lord Bacon died there, in the house of his friend. He was on his way to his seat, Gorbambury, in Hertfordshire, and being taken suddenly ill, was conveyed to Lord Arundel's house; who being absent, only servants were present at the last moments of the great Chancellor. His body was removed to St. Albans, and interred in the church of St. Michael.

Lower down the hill, and at

the corner of Hornsey-lane, stand two fine old structures, Cromwell House and Winchester Hall. The latter possibly belonged to the Bishops of Winchester. The former was built by Cromwell for his son-in-law, Colonel Ireton, who had married the Protector's eldest daughter Bridget. The hall and staircase are panelled with oak, and on the fine massive balustrades were the carved figures of twelve Parliamentary officers in their accoutrements. The ceilings are richly stuccoed according to the fashion of the period, and the Ireton coat-of-arms adorns that in the drawing-room. After passing through many hands it at last became a boys' school, an undesirable change as far as the preservation of the old mansion was concerned; and a fire occurred, which, although its progress was arrested, entirely destroyed the roof.

Opposite Cromwell House there stood, until a year or two ago, a small, quaint, gabled cottage with casement-windows. A flight of steps and a narrow paved path led to the door; behind was a small old-fashioned garden; but the house and its appurtenances looked neglected and ruinous. There formerly had lived one of England's great men, the stanch patriot Andrew Marvel. His stinging satires on the profligacy of the Court brought him many enemies, and rendered his life unsafe, as he was frequently attacked by their followers when journeying to or from London. To all offers from the king of money or place he turned a deaf ear; and at last, having given mortal offence to some of the unscrupulous courtiers and their ladies, he thought it prudent to quit town, as a reward had been offered for his apprehension. He died at Hull

in 1678; so suddenly that the current report was that he had been poisoned. As an author Marvel is best known by his political and satirical poems; but a few of our sacred pieces ascribed to Addison are said, rightly or not, to have been written by him, particularly one commencing,

'The spacious firmament on high;'

and another,

'When all Thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys.'

The interesting little dwelling was purchased by Sir Sydney Waterlow; the house taken down, and the site, with the garden, incorporated into the extensive pleasure-grounds of his new mansion. He has also purchased the neighbouring Lauderdale House, and adapted it as a convalescent home for the patients in one of the great London hospitals, generously giving it free of rent for a certain period. Although it has undergone many alterations to fit it for the intended purpose, much remains to remind one of the olden time. It still bears its original name, was built by the Earl of Lauderdale, and purchased by King Charles II. for the celebrated Nell Gwyn, afterwards created Duchess of St. Albans. A handsome old-fashioned iron railing and gates enclose it from the road, and a paved footway leads to what is now the hall-door, but doubtless was not the original entrance, as on one side is a bath of white marble, rather small certainly, but tradition says that in it Nell bathed her fair limbs. A long low gallery (now divided into rooms for the invalids) runs the whole length of the house. It is formed of timber, and supported, floored, and roofed with beams of oak as large round as a man's body, as hard as iron, and some of them scarcely stripped

of their bark. The modern ornamental fireplaces were added by the late Lord Westbury, when he occupied this house as Sir Richard Bethel. The numerous windows of this gallery open on a broad gravel terrace, below which was a bowling-green, long since converted into a pretty flower-garden. On this terrace King Charles and those of his courtiers with whom he was most intimate were wont to disport themselves; and Nell, who had been in vain urging the king to give her son a peerage, took advantage of the circumstance to obtain her wish. She one day appeared at an upper window with the infant in her arms, and, making a gesture as if to throw it down, called out, 'My liege, save the Earl of Burford!' The king, rushing forward and stretching out his arms, exclaimed, 'God bless the Earl of Burford!'

The Roman Catholic retreat of St. Joseph occupies the site of another old house on the same side of the road, and stands at the entrance of 'Maiden-lane,' once a quiet country road, leading into the town, with fields and trees on each side. These have been succeeded by masses of inhabited or half-finished houses, interspersed with brick-fields, and duly disfigured with boards stating the eligibility of the site for building, regardless of the vicinity of the Fever and Small-pox Hospital. In 1717 it was deemed necessary to erect such an institution in the then outlying district at Battle Bridge, St. Pancras; but when that locality became densely populated, and the land was wanted for a terminus of the Great Northern Railway, it was removed to the foot of Highgate Hill, in the midst of fields and pure air. Beyond is a portion of the North London or Highgate Cemetery, yearly

encroaching on what remains of the rural district to provide last resting-places for the vast population of a large portion of northern London.

Changed, indeed, is Highgate since 'the merry days when we were young;' when Hale's coach was the only public conveyance for passengers to and from London, its destination being the Blue Posts, Holborn. On the Holloway side another coach conveyed daily passengers to their business in the City. Hale's glass coaches were also much in request, as private carriages were the privilege of but few. One of the principal members of the little community was Mr. R., a wealthy banker, who occupied Fitzroy Farm, belonging to Lord Southampton, and which, with its beautiful pleasure-grounds and valuable collection of American plants, has now given place to villas and town gardens. On Sundays he would come to church with his family in a handsome carriage-and-pair, to the admiration of the villagers, who would respectfully give way as the family passed up the aisle of the little church to their large square pew, attended by a well-appointed livery servant carrying a bag of prayer-books. This family coach was followed by a handsome chariot with showy hammercloth. It contained three elderly maiden ladies, dressed alike, and rather youthfully. They lived in a fine old house, enclosed in shrubberies and surrounded by a high wall, so high that not a glimpse of the chimneys even could be obtained. Notwithstanding such obstacles, the gardener found that his fruit-trees were robbed, and requested his mistresses to allow him to put up a warning to deter intruders. Accordingly one morning a board

was placed in a very conspicuous position with the announcement, 'Man-traps set here.' The news of this suggestive notice soon spread through the village, to the great amusement of all but the unfortunate spinsters, who but for the friendly interference of a neighbour would not have known of its existence.

Very little gaiety went on in Highgate. Some subscription balls were at one time attempted at the Gate House Inn; these, however, failed, and but for the little parties given by the wife of the worthy incumbent, to promote, as she said, 'sociability and good feeling,' society would have been at a standstill. He could never comprehend the benefit of these proceedings in small inconvenient rooms like those of the parsonage; especially as his study, not much larger than a closet, was put in requisition for the supper. How pleasant were these friendly gatherings! There was a great deal of vocal music, accompanied by a small square piano rather cracked in tone; and occasionally the lady organist of the church would allow her daughter to perform, by way of varying the entertainment, and an impromptu quadrille was sometimes indulged in at the expense of the poor old piano. The elderly guests seemed equally pleased, and kept up a vast amount of conversation, the staple of which was at that time the great school controversy. Among the most prominent of the talkers on the subject was a severe-looking stately dame, who always wore a white turban and gray-silk dress, shorter than was the fashion, to display, it was alleged, what had once been a handsome foot and ankle, which time, however, had cruelly disfigured. She was what was termed a decayed gentlewoman, and kept 'an establishment for young gen-

tlemen,' or rather a preparatory school for small boys, who trembled at her very look. Nevertheless she was a pleasant person, and much respected in the neighbourhood. The fat little wife of the governor of the charity, who was so indignant in the matter of the clock, was also frequently present with some of her numerous family. She usually dressed in white satin, with a massive gold necklace, to which twelve small lockets were appended. That in the centre, which was larger than the rest and set with pearls, contained some of her husband's hair; the others, some of the more abundant locks of her six sons and six daughters. On one occasion, being asked by a lady, whose husband had long served his country in the navy, in what professions her boys were to be placed, 'Professions, ma'am? I don't understand about professions; my boys will be in business. *There's nothing like business.*'

As the parties commenced at an early hour, so they concluded early; and in the passage there was a considerable array of waiting-maids in attendance with large lanterns to conduct their mistresses home. The useful Hale's bath-chair was also waiting; its tattered crimson-satin lining, and gilt crown on the top, rendered it possible, as its owner asserted, that it had once conveyed royalty when at Bath to take the celebrated waters. Unfortunately the bearers were not trained to keep step, and the load was heavy, two people being generally squeezed into the small space. On one occasion, the three Miss N.'s from the Grove wishing to be taken home together, one of the poor men stumbled, and the chair with its occupants was turned over into the road. Fortunately it was a fine frosty night, and, with the exception of a few

scratches, the ladies escaped unharmed in dress and person, but the bath-chair did not again appear.

Friendly gatherings also took place at another house in the village, at which might sometimes be seen rather remarkable people, whose names are still remembered in connection with literature, although they have long since passed away. Among these was the learned Greek scholar, Thomas Taylor, whose translations of Plato and Aristotle were more appreciated at that day than they are at present. His ponderous works were published partly by subscription and partly by the liberality of an admiring friend, a Mr. Meredith, who also allowed him a pension. Mr. Taylor was a hard-featured man, marked with smallpox, and one or two large warts in addition did not improve a countenance naturally severe and cynical. His religion was pagan; he said that he believed in all the gods and goddesses of antiquity, burned incense in their honour on a small altar in his study, and worshipped what he termed 'The thrice Unknown Darkness.' His diet was Pythagorean, and he believed in transmigration of souls, on which account, although his house at Walworth was beset with large black spiders, he would not allow them to be destroyed, believing that 'they might contain the souls of some of his ancestors or of his friends.' So far did he carry his classical proclivities that he named his only son Proclus.

Another visitor, a literary man of considerable talent, was Charles Cotton, author of *Lacon, or many Things in few Words*, and other works; a man of good family, and rector of Kew and Petersham. His countenance was remarkable, and not very prepossessing; he had lost an arm from an accident

when out shooting, and the iron substitute was unpleasant. Although brilliant and witty in conversation and courteous in manner, it became necessary to decline the rector's acquaintance on the discovery being made that he was deeply in debt, and obliged to live in some obscure part of London. In order to retain his living, he would appear in his church one Sunday in the year, to the disgust of his parishioners, conduct the service, preach an excellent sermon, and disappear almost before the congregation could leave the church. It was well known that he gambled to a great extent; and sinister reports as to his proceedings and his worthless associates became current. A murder was committed, in which some of his companions were implicated, the principal was executed, and all the rest disappeared. From that date the Rev. C. Cotton was never heard of in England, and in due time the living was conferred on a more worthy successor.

John Bellamy, author of a *New Translation of the Scriptures from the Original Hebrew*, the friend of Dr. Parr, of the learned Bishop of Bath and Wells, the Rabbi Meldola, and other learned Jews, was also a frequent and a welcome guest; a simple-minded old man, resembling in dress and appearance a dissenting minister. His conversation was amusing, but rather sarcastic, as he despised what he termed the pomps and vanities of life. On one occasion at dinner, when two very silly young ladies were present, who boasted of their great connections and high descent, the sly old gentleman led them to expatiate on the subject, and then observed,

'My dear Miss W., I knew your great-grandfather.'

'O Mr. Bellamy, I am de-

lighted !' Then, turning to her sister, exclaimed, 'Only think, Mary: Mr. Bellamy knew our great-grandfather !'

'I will go farther back than that, for an ancestor of mine was related to one of yours.'

Miss W. looked incredulous, and disdainfully surveying his primitive dress and appearance, replied haughtily,

'Indeed ! But all my papa's relations were in the army—colonels and generals ; and so were mamma's—one was a governor.'

'But the one I knew was a hedger and ditcher,' said Mr. Bellamy.

Both girls burst into tears, and indignantly contradicted the impertinent assertion.

'I only assert what is true, my dear young ladies. Do you not know that I, you, all of us, are the children of Adam, and that he was a labourer ?'

Another honoured guest was the gentle amiable George Dyer, the poet, whose lifelike portrait was exhibited at South Kensington a few years since. Often might the worthy man be seen toiling up the hill to the house of his friends, where he was always welcome. He was so absent that on various occasions he forgot to put on his *neckcloth* (an article then in fashion) ; and once, when complaining of cold, it was discovered that he had omitted his waistcoat. But his gentle bearing and delightful conversation caused all these peculiarities to be overlooked. Towels, soap, or razors he seemed to consider as superfluities ; at any rate, when, through the kindness of friends, he was supplied with these necessities, they disappeared, he said, under the care of the good woman who attended to his room. This was a garret, or rather a loft, with a sloping roof and a casement-win-

dow, at the top of old Clifford's Inn. The proprietors, out of kindness and on account of his poverty, allowed him this miserable accommodation rent-free. Even with this immunity he must have starved, but for a small pension granted to him by a benevolent nobleman, and the presents made to him by friends. Sometimes the members of the Inn would send him a dinner from a neighbouring chop-house, of which, until reminded, he would forget to partake. If long intervals elapsed without paying his accustomed visits, his friends would send to inquire for him ; and a gentleman who went on one of these occasions thus described his poverty-stricken abode : 'On inquiring at the porter's lodge, I was directed to the upper story of the Inn. I found the woman in attendance (a wretched-looking creature) on the top of a rickety flight of stairs. She said Mr. Dyer was in the country, but would I step into his room ; and, unlocking the door, introduced me into a low sloping-roofed apartment, in which there was but little light, as most of the panes of glass in the casement were broken, and stuffed with either rags or paper. A pallet-bed in one corner, a table covered with mss., and an old chair completed the furniture ; except, indeed, that from the floor to the roof, every available space was stuffed with books. To purchase these he deprived himself of almost the necessities of life. The poor woman deprecated this book-mania, and said she grieved to see the gentleman constantly coming home—sometimes with large folios under each arm, and small volumes in his pockets, which he had purchased at bookstalls or in second-hand shops. Notwithstanding this expenditure, which he could

ill afford, he paid her regularly for her attendance; and if her children were ill or her husband out of work, he would often give her a shilling and deny himself a meal. Observing in a corner a half-starved-looking cur, who wagged his tail on seeing me, I expressed surprise that Mr. Dyer could keep it, and was informed that the creature followed him home one evening, and that although day after day it was beaten away, it was to no purpose; it would accompany the old poet in his walks, and seemed determined to take up his quarters with him, and share his poverty. By this perseverance the poor dog so won upon his self-chosen master, that it was at last admitted to bed and board. Unobtrusive in its attachment, nothing would induce it to enter any house where its master dined, although it would willingly take a dinner which was put outside. The woman took up some folios and disclosed a large hole in the floor, through which the poor animal had fallen during one of its master's absences, and the discovery was only made in time to save it from starvation.'

Mr. Dyer had published, with small success, two volumes entitled *Poetics*; but wishing to carry out a literary work of importance, the *History of Cam-*

bridge, at which University he had graduated, some friends subscribed to supply the means. In course of time the work (one of great research, it was admitted) appeared. It was expensive, but many people who knew and respected the author bought copies. Years afterwards one of the purchasers went into a well-known cheese- and butter-shop in the City, and while waiting to be served, took up one of the numerous printed papers lying on the counter. To his astonishment, it was part of George Dyer's *History of Cambridge*. In answer to an inquiry as to how the work had been obtained, the cheese-dealer said, 'I bought a large quantity of old books from a second-hand bookseller, who was clearing out his cellars, and among them I got two or three copies of this work. I paid so much per pound for them, and you shall have one, if you like, at the same rate.'

Times are altered now in Highgate. The educational advantages which the school offers have attracted many residents: a railroad has now reached the northern extremity. It boasts of a Mechanics' and a Scientific and Literary Institute, also of a *Gazette*. In fact, so continuous is the line of villas and terraces, that it may now be considered as a flourishing suburb of London.

SOME ROYAL WORKS FOR TAPESTRY.

It was Gower who drew the regal picture :

‘The Quene was set at Deyn,
Under her glorious stentit capital,
Among proud tapettis.’

It was Chaucer who drew the other :

‘On the walles olde portraiture
Of horsmen, haukes, and houndes,
And hurte deere full of woundes—
Some like bitten, some hurte with shot.’

It is on the search for such ‘hurte deere’ ‘on the walles,’ for such ‘proud tapettis,’ as the same is being worked or manufactured, that a place is come upon that fits admirably, that must, in a few short touches, be described.

It is a neat ornamented villa, halved by the bright white steps that lead up to its porched door ; it is a neat ornamented villa, with neat parlours on either side of it, with neat parlours (or other rooms) behind, with more neat parlours (or other rooms) up the easy stairs above. Standing there in its own garden, that stretches round it back and front, it is amidst sweet fresh air that is brave and life-giving and alight with sun ; it has at its feet roods and roods of soft green lawn. Near by are borders of the brightest flowers—tall-spiked some of them, red and violet ; in low patches, others of them, pink and orange and scarlet and amber. Near by, too, and here and there and now away and high, there are bees and birds full of flight and busy sound ; there is the shade of trees ; there is the scented elder, its broad plates of blossom spread over new-burst hedges, and sprinkling them with

its little stars ; there are close-cropped grassy meadows ; there is the gleam of wide and winding river ; there are many brooklets, cool and shallow, crusted with water-weeds and the fair decoy of shy forget-me-nots ; there are crowning roses in rich bud, in richer fulness, in their too-quick death, strewing on the ground they grew from their still fair epitaphs of rich showers of leaves.

A fairer spot could not easily have been chosen. Entering the little villa, too, the air is sweet and fresh still ; it is because windows and doors are open that it may get in freely, because there is stained glass at places to give it colour, and the garden fragrance comes in with it, and the garden song comes in with it, and what there must come in of shade and shelter comes agreeably, giving repose and mellowness that are good and grateful. Altogether, to think of people with work found for them at such a spot is to think of happiness indeed ; to think of people spending hours in such a spot that they are paid for is to think of people whose ways of a truth are ways of pleasantness, and whose paths undoubtedly are paths of peace. And as it happens, to put the thing as it should be put, it must be said that the people who are actually doing work here seem to be quite appreciative. The troll of a French *chanson* breaks out, at the moment of entrance, in Frenchmen’s voices, in good time and tune and harmony ; a troll that may be a *barcarole* or a *bachique* or a *vaude-*

ville, that rises to full strength in snatches, and in snatches nearly dies away. Also there is a sense stealing through the place, or an assurance—a sense stealing gradually, subtly—that somebody, surely, must be smoking a cigar.

‘Ah’—it is said in French, when the sense becomes a certainty and brings amusement, and when, moreover, there has been a brisk step into the parlour that gives the readiest invitation—‘it is not forbidden, then, here, this smoking?’

‘Mais, oui;’ and the Frenchman spoken to gives a great French shrug, and has the most perfect bland air of innocence and propriety. ‘C’est défendu,’ he maintains stoutly.

‘Comment?’ while the amusement is still there, and the banter of it. ‘C’est défendu. Bien. Mais—la fumée, d’où vient elle, donc?’

The Frenchman smiles then in company; and he has another great French shrug, and a great broad French line is drawn by him of difference or distinction.

‘Mais, quelquefois une cigarette,’ he says quietly. ‘Quelquefois une cigarette.’

It could not be beaten.

And what of it? Nothing. Not even a stitch—to make the comparison consistent with the tapestry that is the subject; not even a *croisure*, a *grattoire*, a *chaîne*, a *lisse*, a *peigne*—to put it in French tapestry phraseology, and make it fit the French associations. For say it is not the custom for an English workman, in an English manufactory, to console himself (although it may be only ‘sometimes’) with a cigarette, it is true; but, when Henri Deux hired his Italian tapestry-workers to bring better art and ingenuity into his father’s tapestry factory—built, newly and sumptuously, by that

father, Francis I., at Fontainebleau—is it to be supposed that each Giovanni, or Giuseppe, or Giulio, had all his Italian nationality stamped out of him, simply because he sat at his loom on one side of the Alps instead of on the other? On the contrary, it is pretty sure that something that had had its birth under Italian skies crept into *la belle France* on that good occasion; even were it only a liking for the Italian dish of macaroni to thicken Fontainebleau potage, or the substitution of the soft Genoa-velvet feathered hat for the hard head-gear of military necessities—a substitution that somehow did take place at that Henri Deux period, in France and in England both. It must have been so; for it is in such ways that manners and customs spread; it is by such means that nations are happily led to brotherhood. Again: when, half a century afterwards, Henri Quatre, hearing of the famous factories at Brussels, at Arras, at Antwerp, at Lisle, Oudenarde, Tournai, Bruges, Valenciennes, resolved to invite the Flemish weavers from those factories over, and to erect other buildings for them in Paris itself, so that, with Fontainebleau hard pressed to execute existing orders, all his nobility, growing up into refinements and splendours round about him, could embellish their castle walls and doorways to their hearts’ (and purses’) content, with tapestry manufactured within his own dominions, is it to be supposed that each Flemish Hans and Claus and Frantz and Moritz that brought his Brussels lore, or his Arras lore, into Paris with him, could quite forget his personal habits of his Flemish home, and be quite ruled out, all at once, and at the strictest, into a (then) model Parisian? Not in the least. Not for a moment, nor for the

space that would be a moment's shadow. Hand in hand with Hans came something that Hans would have pined for, if he had left it behind. Clinging to Claus was some custom Claus's heart was wedded to, and that he must disport in. Accompanying each Frantz or Moritz, or accompanying his *frau* (for women can work in some departments of a tapestry factory—to be hereafter defined—and, even if they cannot, workmen have a knack of taking their wives with them when they migrate to foreign countries for employment), there would have been many a method, or a trick, or a nicety, that every Marie and Fanchette and Donatienne in the locality would have chattered over, and would have copied and adopted, if, on trial, it proved to be to their mind. So is it the same with this Louis over his cigarette—supposing he were a Louis—or with this Fortuné, with this Armand, this André, Lazare, Sébastien, Gervais, or whatever may have been his Gallic christening, together with the Gallic christening of his equally Gallic-born and Gallic-trained companions. He is here, in this reign of Queen Victoria, in this Albion, among perfidious Albion roses; he is here, down at this Windsor, where Ford went a-birding, where Master Slender asked, 'Be there bears in the town?' where Falstaff declared the Thames shore to be shelvy and shallow (at any rate, at the spot where the laundress of Datchet Mead did her bucking and whiting); and, as a matter of course, French habits have crossed the Channel with him, French customs, French *devoirs* and economies and recreations; as a matter of course, the actualities about him must be the same as other Frenchmen's actualities—at work, they, at their own St. Marcel,

Gentilly, Paris, in their own Gobelins factory, because the Gobelins factory (in a discreet measure) has been brought here with this cigarette-smoker; and that he should retain his strong individuality and characteristic marking is the very aim and purpose of his importation. The thing is clear at a glance. On the clean floors of all the neat parlours of the little ornamented villa there has been placed, here and there, a spittoon; on the feet of all the dozen weavers who at present compose the modest tapestry staff there may be seen a pair of list slippers (with the discarded boots tossed up into some corner, till there has to be passage back again to the *triste* Windsor lodgings); on the heads of the men, as they bend over their minute and artistic stitches, there may be seen characteristic French caps; on the sides of all the looms, as they are erect for working, there may be read, on small slips of paper, in that inevitable little cramped French hand, 'chasse au sanglier,' 'chasse au cerf,' the titles of the costly tapestry the looms contain; obliged to be thus described in the French tongue, or the Frenchmen who should know the most about them would have no understanding. It is good. Good for the Frenchmen, as individuals, that they have tapestry talent at their fingers' ends. Good for England, as a producing country, that tapestry manufacture is again to be carried on under the shadow of a royal residence, with royal patronage as foster-parent (it was Henry VIII. who was the last English monarch to be active upon it; down at Mortlake, Surrey, where it had been introduced by William Sheldon); it is good as another instance of what history does when she is animated by that spirit of hers of self-repeti-

tion; it is good, again, as another proof—with the formula capable of being shifted about to include any other country or insignia—that neither in this century, nor in any forerunning century, can the French cock, with all the antiquated *coquellicot* and comb and spur of him, be taken at once and crushed (or rolled out, it is the same principle) into the mane and lash and roar of the British lion. And, for the rest, it must come, as it is sure to come; and what comes with it must be taken as the natural following.

A word now, then, as to how tapestry is set about. There are two kinds; that by the high warp, and that by the low. The former, known at the Hôtel Royal des Gobelins as *haute-lisse*, means that the loom is upright, like the painter's huge cartoon would have been upright, and that the weaver, or *haute-lissier*, stands to weave, as the painter must have stood to have done his painting; the latter, known as *basse-lisse*, and produced twice as quickly, means that the loom is flat, like a desk, and that the weaver, or *basse-lissier*, sits to work it, precisely as he would sit if he were weaving ribbons or stockings. As it happens, however, at Windsor, that all the looms (there are five), are of the *basse-lisse* sort, the men of course being *basse-lissiers*, the matter is simplified nicely; for the *haute-lisse* loom can be let alone entirely, and it will only be necessary to follow briefly the other. Let there be a preliminary to this, though: it is to discard at once the idea *loom*, and to substitute for it the idea *frame*; for tapestry is an embroidery much more than it is a piece of weaving. It is natural to think of embroidery stretched out on a square of wood for its more convenient and perfect production;

and because a large piece of tapestry wants larger stretching, and larger and stronger pieces of wood on which it can be stretched, that scarcely seems a reason why it should lose its identity and character. Thinking, therefore, of the *basse-lissier's* erection as the frame on which he is to work his wools, and on which his wools

'Tracent de tous côtés
Chasses et paysages,
En cet endroit, des animaux,
En cet autre, des personnages,'

there the erection stands. It is roughness itself. Thick unsmoothed planks, or hunks, of wood form the uprights at each side; other thick unsmoothed planks form the gigantic splay feet on which these uprights stand; and the vast cross-pieces, or bars, round which the cartoon and the tapestry are rolled, are great rough tree-trunks, with little done to them except peeling away the bark, and giving as much planing as makes them the same thickness all the way along. Then equally rough iron winches are at the side of these planks, for screwing up tighter and unscrewing with as little ceremony as if they were big bedsteads; an equally rough plank runs along the front of the lower roller for the men to sit on, with another against which they rest their chests; and rough treddles (or *marches*, as the French word is) are at the men's feet. These treddles are in connection with the *chaînes* (*i.e.* the long threads or warp) that run the whole length of the intended tapestry, and that are what is used as foundation for the stitches instead of canvas; and it is by means of these treddles that the *basse-lissiers* are enabled, in weaver fashion, to treddle forwards one half of their *chaînes*, to treddle backwards the other half (each *chaîne* alternately), and

thus gain space through which to pass their wool-bobbins. It is this last arrangement, as may be supposed, that gives a tapestry loom its loom likeness. There is size in the looms also; those at Windsor being ten or twelve feet wide, and about seven feet high—as large, indeed, as these temporary premises, the villa-rooms, will allow—and those in foreign factories often exceed this, since the tapestry to be produced requires it. But, in regard to the stitch that absolutely effects the tapestry, there is much more hint in it of the home-like simplicity of pillow-lace making than of any shooting through and through of a weaver's shuttle, with sharp click-clack and clockwork regularity. To do it, the basse-lissier has a few yards of wool wound round a *flûte*, as he calls the thin taper-like reel or bobbin he holds in his hand; he passes his *flûte* over and under, and in and about, the small spot of *chaîne* he has to cover with that particular colour; and at every completed *course* (*Anglicè*, row) of stitches thus made by these passings, although they may reach only a quarter of an inch in length, he drags them down against the finished courses at their firmest and tightest, with the strong teeth of a wooden reed or comb. In that is the whole. His one variety is that he is perpetually changing his *flûtes*. This is because he may only want one stitch of one colour, or of one tone, to use his own French word (and what with *flûtes* and reeds and tones there is sufficiently musical suggestiveness of the Pastoral order, and it might be said maliciously that therein lies the groundwork of the modern mode of giving pictures musical nomenclature). This is because, also, he must choose a tone that precisely matches the tone of the

portion of the cartoon he is at the moment going to copy, because, with the scissors lying handily by him, he must snip off one wool directly he has had enough of it, and has to replace it by another. He experiences no difficulty, however, over this. Let the painter, in the fervour of his art, have laid upon his picture the finest gradations of colour ever known; the basse-lissier, sitting looking at it through the *chaînes*—as it is spread an inch or two below them, wound in as they are till all is ended—can keep pace with the fine feeling, and never fail. He has at his command, at Windsor, for instance (where, as has been shown, things are established on the precise plan of the foreign factories), as many as 10,000 different tones of wool to select from. Neither has he to wait for one of these tones, nor to use another because the right tone is not at hand. All along one side of the room in which he sits (and in which two of his compatriots sit with him, since three men can be weaving at once at a loom the size of these at Windsor) there are little narrow shelves, extending from the floor to the ceiling, on which selected numbers of wool-reels lie, kept in their places, and at twirling power, by being dropped on to rows of upright stout steel pins. From these reels the small thin *flûtes* can be readily filled, as occasion demands; moreover, the basse-lissier, if needful, can multiply and modulate his large number of 10,000 tones by blending two of them together on one *flûte* at the same time. Helping him to get suited at a moment, too, is the fact that he does not weave straight along the picture; i.e. straight down a course or row of stitches from whole side to side, no matter through what

tones the course would take him. He does his work in patches, irregularly, as parts of a puzzle, as it were, are put together; following the growth of the design, and finishing a head, for example, wherever the flesh tints of it, the waves of hair, the gold and ornamentation, perhaps, of a jewelled head-dress, lead; or finishing a small figure in a train of figures,—Chaucer's Yong Squyer, may be, in a garment 'embrowdid,'

'as it were a mede
Al ful of fresche floures, white and reede,'
—all of which enables forecasting to be done, in so far as that wool-reels, filled with the needful colours, can be dropped on to the shelf-pins at the weaver's side. Besides, to come to the weightiest reason of all, the Royal Windsor Tapestry Factory is also a dye-works. It is right, this; for is it not in memory that the Gobelins were originally dyers? Two brothers, as they were, Gilles and Jean Gobelin, they came from Venice, *tempo* Francis I. (1515), and established themselves as dyers on a brooklet leading from the small river, Rîèvres, just outside of Paris. There they dyed better than all other dyers in the kingdom; they discovered or introduced a brilliant scarlet; they dyed so successfully, that the brooklet they dyed from was known by their name (and is known by it to this day); and they resolved—full of talent and vigour as they were—that the newly-patronised Italio-Franco tapestry, for which, among other fabrics, their beautiful dyes were required, should be carried on under their own roof, according to their own guidance. That the project was ridiculed is only what might be expected. 'Voilà la folie Gobelin!' cried the Parisian denunciators (rival dyers amongst them) of those three centuries ago,

pointing, as they sneered, to the new buildings being erected; to the slow stream at their foot, which the dyes, and the scouring for the dyes, were still discolouring. It did not bring ruin and devastation, however; for the building stood, the looms began, the tapestry sold, the dyer-brothers became still more noted; and then the Parisians, viewing the affair, gave it the usual short and bitter explanation. The Gobelins had made a compact with the devil, and foreign people impious enough for that never had cause to complain—the bargain was profitable always. And on this dyeing foundation, for a century, the descendants of the brothers prospered, with what happened afterwards in the year 1667, or near it, being almost too well known to want recapitulation. The monarch was Louis Quatorze; every one of the arts and manufactures was to be reborn by him; all buildings were to be turned into edifices; and the minister Colbert, armed with an edict from his chief, bought the Gobelin establishment of the Gobelin representatives, called it the Hôtel Royal des Gobelins, and made it royal really, in size, in embellishment, in invitation, in artistic thoroughness and purport. He elected the painter Le Brun to be Monsieur le Directeur en Chef; the principal cartoons this master produced—those Four Seasons, those Four Elements, those battles of Alexander* (when his Majesty the King was observed to be much interested, and to come to look on very frequently), those historical pieces marking the chief events of the time—were successfully copied into tapestry; and, in addition, Colbert made the

* Afterwards hung at Blenheim, in the Bow-window Room and the Duke's dressing-room.

hotel the rendezvous for painters, sculptors, gold-workers, ebonists, promising foreign workmen pensions and many privileges if they would come. And through all, it must be distinctly noted, Colbert kept up the dye-works. They were of immense importance; the repute of the tapestry depended upon their proper chemistry and manipulation; and in one century more—that is, in a century ago from now, viz. in 1772, when Diderot and D'Alembert issued their *Encyclopédie* at Paris—these dye-works were still such a prominent feature, the *Encyclopédistes* had to devote many of their pages to them, and to publish many engravings to illustrate the pages. Looking now at these engravings, and at those showing the tapestry works that follow, it is comic to come upon dyers hanging out cloth to dry, and weavers seated at their looms, in pig-tails and ruffles, wearing knee-breeches and buckles in their shoes (like nobility of the old court, or town-shepherds, unfixed bodily from groups of Dresden china); but, in spite of the whim of this, the close connection of the two sets of workmen brings ready comprehension of why there should be a dyeing-house at Windsor. It is that, since an infinity of tones is wanted, the chance of obtaining that infinity should never be away. It is that the Gobelins found it imperative to have dyeing at hand, to have it under control, to have it immediate; and as it is the intention at Windsor to outdo the old work, not to halt lamely behind it, it would be a poor beginning at trying for this result if there were exclusion at once of a department that those who have succeeded best never were without.

To finish tapestrying, and tapestrying as it is at Windsor, there

remain a few details yet. There is the manner of it—that often commented - on fact that the weaver works with the back of his copy uppermost, never seeing its hidden and brilliantly-dyed face. It is not wonderful in the least, when the man's method is considered. He could not be one moment at the front of his loom doing a stitch, and the next at the back of it cutting off a thread; in fact, he could not have the artist's cartoon suspended where it is obliged to be suspended, and ever be able to get at the inner side of his copy to cut anything from it at all; and he could not be getting his copy soiled, as it must get soiled, if he let the face of it be his table, all the months of the work's duration, laying his implements upon it, and his little groups of flutes; and laying his cap upon it occasionally, his little chest-cushion, his slippers possibly, or even that prohibited cigarette. He can only do as he does: keep that side of his work away from danger that ought to be away from danger; keep it neat by neat stitches, smooth by smooth wools, fresh by fresh colours, letting it be the perfect corporeal reflection (if such a comparison may pass) of the picture it is always looking at; letting it come out, after all the long facing of it, all its intimate companionship, so dipped in richness and gorgeousness that it is as rich and gorgeous as the good original. Then there are the materials of which tapestry is composed. In the East, they were silk, wool, flax, byssus,* gold, and precious stones; at Florence and Venice, they were wool, and gold and silver thread; at Arras and other Flemish towns they were wool alone (with always hemp or flax for the *chaînes*); in France, all these combinations

* A very fine spun flax, and hence the Latin *byssinus*, made of lawn.

were adopted, according to style of subject and costliness; at Windsor, to-day, there is the Arras method of wool only, at any rate at this probationary period, and the *chaines* are formed of stout soft cotton. Following this, is the price at which tapestry is produced. It is at Windsor about two guineas and a half for a square foot; arriving at twenty-two guineas for a square yard; at a hundred guineas for a strip a yard wide and an apartment (of ordinary pitch) high; at a thousand guineas for a piece ten times this width and the same height, a piece of sufficiently large dimensions to hide away a wall. It is a costly covering, these figures show, and a perishable. If it hangs, too, it must soil and spoil; if it does not hang, wherefore be its possessor? Then the pay to the tapestry-weavers (referring still to the pay at Windsor) has to be set down. It is tenpence an hour; coming out at the week's end, since the men work nine and a half hours per day, to about forty-eight shillings. That is workman's wages merely, it is thus seen; nothing better.

* That gives the valuable little antiquarian proof that when Chaucer sent 'an Haburdassher' to Canterbury, and sent with him 'a Carpenter, a Webbe, a Deyer and a Tapicer,' he must have meant the masters of the caldrons and the tapestry-loom, not the knaves or varlets who stood at the first with stained arms, and bent over the last, poring. For these identical pilgrims their painter said, delineating them, were

'Of a solempne and gret fraternité.
 Ful freish and newe there gere piked
 was;
 There knyfes were i-chapud; not with
 bras,
 But al with silver, wrought ful clene and
 wel,
 There girdles and there pouches, every
 del.
 Wel seemed ech of hem a fair bur-
 geys,

To sitten in a yeldhalle on the deys.
 Every man for the wisdom that he can,
 Was schaply for to ben an aldurman,
 For catel hadde they inough and rente;'

and it is quite clear there is no aldermanic future or present cattle-possessing to be enjoyed or hoped for from the pay earned by a tapestry-weaver weaving at a loom. And then there are the wages of a tapestry-woman. She gets ten shillings a week, perhaps, or twelve at the most, for the nine and a half hours' work daily, the same as the men; her labour not being technical at all, but simply the labour of a sempstress (combined with sempstress' application!), and meeting, therefore, with only ordinary sempstress' pay. She repairs, that is the fact. She is merely employed to stitch together the slit places in old tapestry (did many Hamlets thrust their rapiers through?); which is done at the back with ordinary thread and needle, with the ordinary stitch called 'button-hole.' Formerly there was the old skilled labour of the *rentra-yeur* and *rentrayeuse*, the fine-drawers. This was when tapestry, being only made by hand, in pieces, had to be fine-drawn together, and fine-drawn so delicately the piecing was never seen; but the power afforded by the introduction of the loom, and by the enterprise of large owners (such as the Gobelins), of weaving large hangings, of any given size, in one, has compelled this particular department to die out. There is the necessity yet, however, to fill up holes in tapestry—holes that have been gnawn into it, or that have come from rot, or from age, or fire; and this is another of the labours executed at Windsor with marked success. One very favourable example that may be alluded to is the face of a small figure; the face being, possibly, the size of a florin-piece. This had been

burnt away ; and under the quick hand of one of the Windsor women has been reproduced exactly as if it had been a portion of the old work. Whilst, too, these tapestry-women sit plying their needles (there are eight of them in all), they have the fine air to breathe that was spoken of at the beginning of this sketch ; they look out upon the bright sky and the beautiful gardens ; they have the scent and the beauty of the growing flowers ; and it is very pleasant to find this is so, and to be able to make the record of it.

It is pleasant also just for a moment, in conclusion, to mention a few pieces of tapestry that may almost be said to have played a part in the world's history. There was Penelope's, that will rise readily to the recollection—all tapestry, called by the Greeks *peripetasmata*, being supposed to have been the invention of Minerva. There were the magnificent pieces described by Euripedes as forming a tent in the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, which represented the sun, moon, stars, hunting scenes, and so on. There were the especially costly pieces inherited by the Romans, B.C. 133, from Attalus, King of Pergamus, after the date of which lucky legacy any splendid gift unexpectedly falling in was called *attalicus*, with the current meaning to the word also of cloth of gold, brocaded, wealthy, opulent. There was the wonderful tapestry known as the Bayeux, more interesting at this day possibly than all, executed by Queen Matilda and her maidens in commemoration, and as an authentic account (of the graphic sort always popular) by eye-witnesses, and by the needle, of the much-esteemed Norman Conquest of England. It is this tapestry that gives especial oppor-

tunity that may not be missed for a detaining note. It is worked with wool on to linen ; it must have been meant as an enriching and ornamental margin or border, for it is a mere strip, very long, very narrow, being only 20 inches in height and as much as 2568 inches (or 214 feet) long ; it is worked in seventy-two pieces, allowing for seventy-one damsels and her Majesty to have been 'commemorating' all together ; it has on each compartment a superscription in Latin (so that all scholars, Saxon or Norman, could read) ; it has all of its compartments fine-drawn together into a long whole by some *rentrayeuse*, or series of *rentrayeuses*, who afford another instance, that is *à propos*, of French fingers executing French work under English skies. But the newer and nearer interest in this tapestry is the fact that, in 1803, Bonaparte, wishing for another conquest of England, be-thought himself of the stimulus to be found in it. It had previously never left Bayeux Cathedral, where Queen Matilda had consigned it ; and it had only been exhibited there, hooked all round the nave, for eight days at a time, once a year. Bonaparte, however, ordered it to be carried to Paris, and thence to all the principal towns ; and at all these places it was opened and hung and visited, and no doubt made invasion seem a glory indeed, and conquest, after invasion, an act very easy of repetition. It was a curious piece of diplomacy, not complimentary to the nation whom it was thought it could lead and dazzle ; but the need for such is gone now, it is to be hoped, for ever ; and nothing will tend so much to keep the need away as such commercial facts as that English and French work-people will soon be all weaving and dye-

ing together in the permanent Royal Windsor Tapestry Factory now building, both sets under the same roof, both sets striving at the same skill, affected by the same chances, able to be benefited by the same prosperity. And that prosperity will come is little doubtful. There seems no element wanting, no by-path overlooked, sure to lead to it. Especially is it hopeful—from all views of the scheme, taking it as art, taking it as manufacture, taking it as new birth of a costly luxury—that the tapestry already executed at the works is full of human and kindly, instead of barbaric and unkindly, interest. Recalling the subjects of the tapestries still in existence in England, saved from mediæval times, they come into the mind as ‘The Functions of the Cavalry,’ ‘The Triumph of Ceres,’ &c., preserved at Stow, the seat of Earl Temple; as ‘Cyclops at the Forge,’ ‘Neptune with Attendants,’ ‘The Cardinal Virtues,’ ‘Sciences,’ ‘Elements,’ preserved elsewhere; recalling the supposition, too,

that the taste for large hangings of tapestry (other than the marginal sort like the Bayeux) came into Europe at the time of the Crusades, when the Christian knights saw the Pagan palaces decorated with it, and brought home the news (and some loot?), after which the name ‘Sarazins’ clung to tapestry-makers in France for centuries; and there is a sense of vagueness, mythology, and butchery about the work that does more than hinder pleasure at the sight of it, that sometimes even repels. Ascertaining, on the other hand, what are the subjects that have been completed at Windsor up to now, they are found to be, appropriately, eight scenes from the *Merry Wives*, bringing the smiles that should be brought and much contentment; and if the rich humour and character to be found in such a story as this be always commissioned by client and executed by artist, a school of art and an industry will be founded, in all respects royal and noteworthy.

FORTUNES MADE IN BUSINESS.

VII.

ARISTIDE BOUCICAUT, THE BON MARCHÉ KING.

IN considering the successful career of any one of the great self-made financiers and capitalists, one is but too apt to allow one's thoughts to be absorbed by the fact of the success having been achieved, and to study with admiration the different steps by which he who was born in the cottage of poverty has ascended to the palace of wealth. There is, however, we would venture to assert, a nobler subject, and one far more worthy of study in reading the lives of the great self-made giants of industry. It is given to but few men, perhaps, to rise from obscurity to eminence, from poverty to great wealth, by their own unassisted endeavours; but it is given to still fewer to possess a heart so magnanimous and charitable, a theory of life so true, pure, human, and Christian, that those who have not risen can feel no envy of those who have, inasmuch as the hardly-won blessing of wealth is dedicated by the successful toiler to the relief of his less lucky fellow-workers. It is, in a word, not the mere fact of the success that we should remark in reading the careers of our self-made men; no, nor even the steps by which that success has been attained; but quite as much to question the use made of that success when it has once been achieved.

It would be as untrue as it would be ungenerous to allege that the prosperity hardly won by our self-made men is never put to noble uses; a multitude of in-

stances to the contrary come to our mind as we write; but on the other hand, it must be admitted that the scale turns heavily the opposite way. We do not often hear of our self-made capitalists caring much about the relationship which Robert Browning assures us exists between *Date* and *Dabitur*. It is, indeed, natural that it should be so: if money easily won be easily parted with (it is notorious that few men are so lavish and generous in their expenditure of money as gamblers), the reverse is also true; and when every pound and penny represent hours, days, weeks, and years of toil, the lucky possessor thereof is apt to look twice before he gives many of his shekels *pro bono publico*. Then again the ascent has been almost invariably steep and hard; and there have been many rough and dangerous places to cross. One cannot now in these days of overcrowded markets and tough competitions expect to rise from darkness to light easily, and without almost incessant toil and application. The result is that, in most cases, as the conqueror only tastes his triumph towards the close of his life, he is tempted, thoughtless of the less lucky, to give himself up to the enjoyment thereof. The self-made man is so apt to say, 'Let others help themselves; I had nobody to help me.' This is one reading of the lesson taught by a successful career. There are, however, some who understand it in a different way; some who, in

the midst of their toil and labour, have never lost that divine gift so beautifully described by Swinburne,

‘The splendour of a spirit without blame;’

some who work and reap that they may distribute among the needy; some who seem to win success that they may share it with their struggling brothers. In cases like this triumph and prosperity is not only a great, but it is a holy thing; and it is of a man who held this theory of life that we would now trace the story, not calling attention so much to his success or the way he achieved it, as to the glorious uses he put it to when it had been once won.

Aristide Boucicaut was born in 1810 (the exact day is not known), in the little town of Bellesme, in the Department of the Orne. His father, a hatter, could give him but little material assistance in life; and in early life young Boucicaut used, as was the custom in those days, to go about the country from town to town and from village to village, selling his stock, which was composed of dresses, shawls, ribbons, &c., and what are known in French as *les nouveautés*. When still very young he left for Paris, and entered into the well-known establishment of ‘Le Petit St. Thomas,’ a shop somewhat similar to that of Swan & Edgar or Marshall & Snelgrove in London. Here his real life began; he had now entered into the career which he was destined to follow with such gigantic success. Ere long his spotless integrity, great capacity for business, wonderful application, and courteous bearing attracted the attention of his employers, and he was appointed *chef du comptoir*, one of the most important and responsible positions in the establishment.

Aristide Boucicaut was, how-

ever, at this time young and ambitious; he felt that he had within him the making of a master, and began casting his eyes about him to find some fitting theatre in which to give a fair trial to the theories of commerce with which he was already inspired. Ere long he discovered what he was in search of. Farther down the same street in which the Petit St. Thomas is situated (the Rue du Bac) was a small shop devoted to a meagre sale of ribbons, cheap stuffs, and hosiery. Boucicaut made the acquaintance of the proprietor (who is still living, by the bye); and nothing daunted by the fact that the fortunes of the little establishment were anything but brilliant, he made offers of partnership which were, as may be easily imagined, readily accepted. Thus it was that the mammoth commercial institution known as the Bon Marché, the fame of which extends over the whole civilised globe, began. The area occupied by the original shop was about forty square feet, and may be viewed to-day; it is now occupied by the shirt department, one of the smallest of the numerous departments comprised in the Bon Marché. The same trusty weapon which had done him such good service at the Petit St. Thomas, integrity, capacity, and application, he now used again, with like happy results. The business steadily increased, and in 1852 Aristide Boucicaut became sole proprietor of the little shop. The first few steps of the ladder had now been successfully climbed, and it is time for us to consider for a moment before going further the secret of this success, for a secret of course there was. In former years Boucicaut had often noticed that customers, who might have made their purchases in haste or carelessly, were very frequently

much dissatisfied with what they had bought when they had time to examine the article more closely. What was to be done? Nothing. The article had been sold and bought; it was not the fault of the tradesman if the purchaser did not know his mind; and it was quite impossible to take the unsatisfactory article back, or to allow it to be exchanged for one more pleasing. The more Boucicaut thought over this, the more he became convinced that it was improper and unfair to the tradesman and to the purchaser alike; for in the case of the former he dissatisfied a customer, who would be but too apt to speak evil of his establishment; and in the case of the latter it was hard that one should have to pay for what one did not want. Was there no remedy? Would it not be well that in dealings between seller and purchaser there should be no sharpness, no taking of any undue advantage one of another, but that perfect good faith and confidence should exist between the two? Boucicaut determined to make the experiment. He allowed goods to be taken from his establishment for inspection; and if, after a reasonable delay (provided, of course, the article had not been used), the object purchased should not suit the purchaser, it could be returned, exchanged for another, or the money refunded. This new scheme caused a complete revolution in trade in Paris; every one flocked to the shop of the tradesman who acted with such generous good faith, and from that day the fortune of Aristide Boucicaut was made. In vain other tradespeople expostulated. Boucicaut showed them that every man was at liberty to do as he pleased to satisfy his customers, and pointed out to his rivals, when they complained that

he was taking away all their custom, that the only remedy would be for them to imitate his example. The success of his system may be accurately calculated by the following significant facts: in 1852 the business done by the Bon Marché did not represent half a million of francs; in 1869 it represented twenty-one millions.

It was at this period (1869) that M. Boucicaut began to make great improvements in his establishment and to enlarge it. He bought vast lots of neighbouring land, and began to build the splendid palace we all know to-day, with frontage in the Rue du Bac, the Rue de Sèvres, the Rue Velpeau, and the Rue de Babylone, one of the most gigantic temples of industry in the world.

Fortune now was his—fortune won by introducing a new system of fair, open dealing in commerce; and M. Boucicaut at length found himself in a position to indulge in his paramount passion of philanthropy. In former days, when he himself had been an apprentice, the clerks employed in his particular branch of industry had been more degraded than those employed in any other branch of trade. Recruited from the lowest ranks of society, contemptuously known as ‘calicos,’ and despised by their fellow-workers in every other department of trade, the clerks in the *nouveautés* shops of Paris had come to be regarded by the world at large as a class of beings out of the pale of ordinary human sympathy, as necessary evils; as instruments useful but offensive, the breaking or marring of which was of no importance to any one, provided they could be replaced. We all know the light shed by Hood’s immortal ‘Song of the Shirt’ upon a certain dark corner in English trade. Well, the con-

dition of the 'calicos' twenty years ago in Paris was far worse than that of the shirt-makers in London in Hood's time. Despised, trampled down, and over-worked, they were

'Hardened to hope, insensible to fear,
Scarce living pulleys of a dead machine;
Mere wheels of work and articles of
trade
That grace the proud and noisy pomp of
wealth.'

Boucicaut determined to give all the pith and marrow of his mind to the reforming of this sad state of things. His own personal experience had taught him that if the 'calicos' were a degraded and untrustworthy class, it was not altogether their fault. They lived on starvation wages; they worked from early morning till late at night, and could only hope to be employed so long as their over-taxed strength held good. As for any hope of laying by some slight sum to keep them in old age, that was quite out of the question. They were worked like dogs while health lasted; when that failed they were thrown aside to make room for others. Another cause of the degradation of the class of men to which we are alluding was obviously to be found in the fact that their ranks were recruited from the very scum of the metropolis. Dishonesty was of course severely punished; but there were none but the most ordinary precautions taken to provide against this dishonesty; and the result was that an honest clerk stood every chance of being contaminated by his surroundings, and of sinking to their level. Boucicaut determined to cleanse these Augean stables. He began by curtailing the hours of toil; opening his shop at half-past seven, closing it at eight, and giving a whole holiday on Sundays and festivals. He then increased the salary of his clerks, carefully took every

precaution to employ only those in whose integrity and good conduct he could have perfect confidence, and in return for their good services promised them his sympathy, protection, and almost paternal care. The result of this system was most brilliantly successful; the best workmen eagerly sought employment in the establishment presided over by so beneficent a master, and sympathetic kindness bore its golden fruit in hegetting integrity, application, and loving obedience. The whole class of *nouveautés* clerks became transformed into something higher and better (for, in course of time, other employers had necessarily to imitate in some feeble way the example set by the illustrious subject of this sketch), and the name 'calico' ceased for ever to be a term of opprobrium.

'That there should be one man die ignorant who had capacity for knowledge, this I call a tragedy,' says Thomas Carlyle. Aristide Boucicaut agreed with the philosopher of Chelsea. Let us examine closely and in detail his treatment of his clerks. We have already mentioned the hours of opening and closing the shop, and we would now draw attention to the following rule, which gives a capital idea of the system of the wise and tender-hearted philosopher who framed it:

'The establishment of the Bon Marché never inflicts a fine upon its *employés* for delay in arriving in the morning, or for any other cause. It trusts in return that all will make their best efforts to be punctual and active.'

This regulation gives the keynote to M. Boucicaut's theory of trade. He does not say, 'Do by me as you would have me do by you;' but he begins by doing good, and confidently expects that his benevolence will be appreciated and re-

warded. What a lesson to cynics is here! Behold the example of a man who, after thirty-five years of incessant toil and labour, confidently believed and trusted in the goodness and nobleness of heart of his fellow-creatures, and behold again how well founded was this belief, and how successful was the scheme evolved from it!

Some of the clerks (those married, or who have been married and have families) sleep out; but many are accommodated with board and lodging in the Bon Marché building. M. Boucicaut knew Paris too well not to appreciate the fact that it is not sufficient to plant the good seed, but that it must be nursed and tended. A night passed out with roistering companions will set a simple honest country lad spinning down the road to ruin with more fatal velocity than a Parisian youth, who, accustomed to the morbid and feverish atmosphere of the boulevards, resists the thousand-and-one insidious temptations of town more easily. Those who board and lodge in the establishment are served in series: three breakfasts and three dinners (three also for the women, who eat apart, and three also for the workwomen); the hours being, first series of breakfast, half-past nine; second ditto, half-past ten; third ditto, half-past eleven. Dinner: first series, five o'clock; second, six; and third, seven. There is again a separate breakfast and dinner for the stable-hands and coachmen. At half-past seven in the morning the clerks are served with hot soup in the dining-room, and the women with *café au lait* or *chocolat* in their bedrooms. A special clause in the regulations of this model establishment stipulates that the food must be 'nourishing and abundant,' and in consequence no

supplementary requirement must be paid for except coffee or extra dessert. There are about two thousand souls boarding in the establishment of the Bon Marché; those who are married are allowed one hour every day to spend at home. The bedrooms are models of cleanliness; the *employés* are forbidden to frequent them during the day without special permission from the *chef du comptoir*, and it is also forbidden to hang pictures or engravings on the wall. Smoking is naturally forbidden in the bedrooms and corridors; but the male *employés* are provided with a billiard- and reading-room, and the female with a *salon* furnished with a piano. Such as may like to dine at the establishment on Sunday are readily allowed to do so, provided they have their names put down the day before. For the benefit of such *employés* as cannot go out in the course of the day, there are a hairdresser's-room established in the shop and two refreshment-rooms, one for the male and one for the female *employés*. An efficient medical staff has been attached to the Bon Marché under the care of Docteur Claisse; free consultations are given every morning; and an infirmary for such *employés* as cannot rejoin their families has been provided in the Rue de la Chaise. So much for the animal comforts and necessities; but M. Boucicaut aimed higher than merely to make his clerks comfortable; it was his intention, first to make them happy, and then to cultivate and enlighten them, so that they could make themselves prosperous. With this object in view M. Boucicaut organised a series of lessons (one held every night of the week) in English, German, vocal and instrumental music, and fencing; lectures are also given by distinguished professors on scientific, his-

torical, or literary subjects. All this is of course offered to the *employés* free of any charge, the whole necessary expenses being defrayed out of the generous benefactor's private pocket. Since the formation of these musical classes the *employés* of the Bon Marché have given several concerts which have redounded greatly to their credit, and have won prizes at different meetings of the Orphéon Society, notably at Troyes, at Rouen, and at Dijon. Who can tell but what the philanthropical enterprise of M. Boucicaut may be the means of giving to the world another Rubini, Malibran, or Paganini? A well-selected library is also placed at the disposal of the *employés*.

This is all, indeed, noble; but we must now consider the greatest work of philanthropy ever achieved by the beneficent prince of commerce, whose career we are sketching in this paper. We have noticed above that in former times there was no provision made for the *employés* in the *nouveautés* department of trade in case of illness or infirmity after long service. This evil M. Boucicaut determined to remedy. There were two courses open to him: the first (the most natural and ordinary) being, inasmuch as the clerks of the Bon Marché got higher wages than those employed in any other similar establishment in Paris, to deduct from time to time some small sum from the salary of each, to group such sums together, to invest it safely and at good interest, and thus to form a reserve fund in case of some catastrophe. The second, and only other plan to adopt, was for M. Boucicaut to put his hand into his pocket, and to freely give the necessary sum for the foundation of such a reserve fund. This latter course was the one M. Boucicaut gener-

ously elected to pursue. He could not bear the idea of deducting a penny from the wages of his *employés*; so he cut the knot by simply furnishing out of his own pocket a large sum of money sufficient to meet the wants of the case, and to be devoted to the foundation of a fund which should provide for the necessities of those in his employ, who, either by reason of age or illness, were incapacitated for further labour. Those may benefit by this fund who have served the establishment of the Bon Marché for five consecutive years; the men who have been in M. Boucicaut's employ for twenty consecutive years, and the women who have served him fifteen, have a right to benefit by the fund, as have the males who have reached the age of sixty, and the females who have attained fifty, years. In these last-named cases the *employé* can demand to withdraw his share out of the common fund, and it will be given him; or M. Boucicaut will invest it for him as he thinks fit. In the case of an *employé* having reached the age mentioned above, or having served the house for the term of years we have just specified, and yet not wishing to retire, the capital which his share in the fund represents will not be given to him, but he may enjoy the income arising therefrom. Absences caused by illness, or granted by permission, or (as is often the case in France) necessitated by the conscription or military duty, are not considered as injuring in any way the clerk's claim to having served the establishment for the required number of years consecutively. Such absences are overlooked. In case of the death of a participator of the fund his share is either given to his widow or heirs, or invested for them by M. Boucicaut; and the female

employée, who has a right to participate in the fund, and who contracts marriage, has, no matter how short a time she may have served the establishment, and even if she be about to leave it, her share presented to her on her wedding-day.

Such is, in brief outline, the gigantic philanthropical institution conceived and built up by the late M. Boucicaut: a noble fabric, is it not? and worthy of one of the greatest public benefactors this century has seen. It has not only made happy, prosperous, and comfortable thousands of individuals, but it has regenerated and saved a whole class. Its beneficial results have not been felt in M. Boucicaut's establishment alone, but have affected all one branch of trade and industry. Clerks, having become happier and more enlightened, have necessarily become better, and the result has been most favourable to French trade. Other establishments of a like character in commerce have not dared to stand still while the Bon Marché was making such progress, and have been forced to ameliorate the condition of their *employés* in sheer self-defence, and to endeavour to imitate, at least in some feeble and specious way, the grand example set them. Cases of dishonesty or ingratitude are of the rarest possible occurrence in the Bon Marché. An *employé* at that establishment would have to be, indeed, thoroughly heartless and unprincipled to fail to appreciate the thousand and one precious advantages and privileges he enjoys, thanks to the generous self-sacrifice and sympathetic care of his employer.

But M. Boucicaut's restless spirit of philanthropy was not satisfied with merely rendering happy, prosperous, and contented

those in his immediate employ. His experience of life had taught him that the field for doing good is boundless; and when the tide of fortune permitted him to do so, he determined to go out of his sphere and assist a class of men who, ever since the world began, have been proverbially in need of aid and patronage—artists. With a keen, highly cultivated, but thoroughly unaffected, and unwarped by theory, taste for art, M. Boucicaut not only formed a fine private gallery of his own (a Fromentin in his possession being one of the greatest works ever achieved by that famous master), but instituted a public gallery in the establishment of the Bon Marché, in which hitherto unknown and struggling artists may exhibit their works *quite free of any charge*. The picture need only be sent with the name and address of the painter, and the price he asks. An especial guardian is charged to look after the pictures, and to negotiate a sale, if possible, the sum realised being simply handed over to the artist without the reduction of one penny.

We have already spoken of the fundamental principle of M. Boucicaut's theory of commerce: perfect good faith and honesty; very small profits, but quick returns; and a well-grounded confidence that one dealing with his establishment on this system would lead to many more. Let us now look for a moment at the brilliant result of this theory. As we have already seen, the business done by the Bon Marché in 1852 did not represent half a million of francs, whereas in 1869 it represented twenty-one millions. It now (and has done for the past few years) represents between sixty and eighty millions yearly.

Of his personal income it is difficult to make any exact esti-

mate. M. Boucicaut was ever a reserved man on all personal matters, and disliked nothing so much as talking about himself, unless, indeed, it were *thinking* about himself; but that his private fortune must have been very great is of course beyond all doubt. Of his marriage but one child was born, a son, who, with his widow, inherits the property and business, and for whom, on the occasion of his marriage, he bought the splendid château and park of Chamarande, which formerly belonged to the late Duc de Persigny. This splendid wedding-gift cost something between one and two million of francs.

Personally, the late M. Boucicaut was a perfect type of the true Norman. Of almost herculean build, this gentle giant enjoyed the most robust health. M. Boucicaut would have seemed destined to enjoy a much longer life than fell to his lot; for his habits were abstemious and temperate, and his tastes most simple. His face, with the irregular features, massive brow, and sharp penetrating eyes, seemed at first sight indicative almost of sternness, so strong and powerful was the general expression; and it was only when the piercing glance from beneath the knit brows melted into a benignant smile that one recognised that he was in the presence of power indeed, but of power for good. We have said that he was reserved, and it is so; but he was only reserved about his own personal affairs, was the very reverse of cold in his bearing or manner, and was ever ready to discuss the details of his business with any worthy companion. There was, indeed, nothing so distasteful to M. Boucicaut as anything that savoured of slyness or of cunning. He was always desirous of having the strong fresh

air of public opinion constantly ventilating all his dealings; and although he always abstained from an undue use of advertising, he ever readily invited criticism and sought advice. In his relations to his fellow-men, he was as gentle and simple as a child. His first impulse was always to believe in the goodness and honesty of every one; but woe to him who should deceive him. There is some pain and grief which is a more terrible weapon than anger or blows; and the few who were ever unlucky enough to incur the displeasure of the Bon Marché king will not readily forget the look of surprise, dismay, and disgust with which he dismissed them from his employ.

One December day, twelve years ago, as M. Boucicaut was driving up the Champs Elysées, his horses took fright and ran away. In this accident M. Boucicaut was severely jarred, and a tumour resulted, which eventually caused his death in December 1877. The catastrophe was sudden: although suffering, more or less, for some time, he was only considered in danger but a short time before his death, the news of which was received by Paris as a public calamity. His relatives, friends, and associates were simply stunned. To many the world seemed a blank now that their patient, tender, sympathetic, generous-hearted friend had been taken away. The following imposing funeral-ceremony took place at St. Thomas d'Aquin: The little church was completely draped in black; a baldacchino was hung at the upper part of the church, and served as a dome to the catafalque, which was literally hidden by wreaths of flowers. At each corner was an allegorical figure, representing Faith, Hope, Charity, and

Religion. On each side of the aisle and around the catafalque were twelve candlesticks of sixteen branches each, and eight of the peculiar funereal lamps, used on such ceremonies in Roman Catholic churches, known as *cas-solettes*—all sending up a gloomy and impressive green flame. M. l'Abbé Ravailhe, curé of St. Thomas d'Aquin, said Mass and gave absolution; and during the religious ceremony, MM. Alary, Quesne, and other artistes from the Grand Opéra, sang several appropriate chants, among others a most impressive 'Te Decet.'

A large and select crowd of persons had assembled together to pay their last tribute of respect and affection to the great philanthropist, and more than four thousand people followed the *cortége*. The funeral procession was lead by MM. Guérin, Gouin Louis, and Emile Morin, the near relatives of the deceased. His son, dangerously ill at that time at Nice, could not undertake with safety the fatigue of the journey, and was not present; but his widow had arrived in time to take part in the sad ceremony. Behind the *cortége* came the principal heads of the establishment of the Bon Marché, forty-five in all, and each carrying a wreath made of camellias, Parma violets, lilacs, and roses. Two immense wreaths of two mètres in diameter, composed of roses, lilacs, and violets, and bearing the inscription, 'A M. Boucicaut, les employés,' was carried by four clerks immediately behind the hearse; and then followed wreaths of every description, borne by *employés* and friends of the deceased. One of them attracted especial attention, for on it was to be read the following touching and eloquent inscription: 'The poor of the Quartier St. Germain to M.

Boucicaut.' It was the supreme farewell of those who had been unhappy and oppressed to their great deliverer and friend, who would smile on them, sympathise with them, and aid them never, never again.

At one o'clock the funeral procession set out to march to the Mont Parnasse Cemetery, where the remains were to be placed in the family vault. All along the way the streets were densely packed by a sympathising crowd, who sadly admired the splendid funeral car, drawn by four horses, led by footmen. The plumes of the car had been replaced by immense wreaths of white roses. Preceding the mourning coaches came M. Boucicaut's private landau, the lamps of which were lighted and shrouded with crape. A most touching incident occurred at the door of the church when the corpse entered, and then again when it was removed—an incident which showed the tender and affectionate gratitude entertained for their late master by his *employés*. The clerks endeavoured to take the coffin containing the beloved remains from the hands of the undertaker's servants, and carry it themselves; but this privilege, being against the law, was refused them.

It would be wearisome to give a list of the notabilities present at this touching and impressive ceremony. We will only mention Lachaud, the celebrated advocate; André Roussel, Lainé, Charrier, representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, &c.; Vély, the favourite artist of M. Boucicaut, who, by express desire of the family, made a sketch of the deceased on his deathbed; Perrey,—in a word, much that was famous in the world of commerce and art.

At the grave M. Bonguereau,

the famous painter, and one of the greatest masters of contemporary French art, delivered a most touching and eloquent oration, from which we make the following extracts, as giving some idea of how M. Boucicaut was appreciated by those who knew him well:

‘Gentlemen, permit one of the most faithful friends of Aristide Boucicaut to detain you for one moment before this open grave, and to salute with one last farewell the mortal remains of a good man, whom death has chilled but too soon. As for his soul, in the immortality of which he himself believed, it is surrounded with such a throng of good deeds, of hardships lessened, of tears wiped away, that it is already standing before its Maker.

‘The life of him whom our regrets follow beyond the tomb merits to be laid before all as an example, for it was passed in doing good, and shows what can be done when intelligence, application, and honesty are united. . . .

‘It is not for me to follow step by step his progress in commerce, or to describe his long efforts or his perseverance in founding an establishment which has no rival in the world. I would rather remind you that he was ever true to the motto he had chosen, “Loyalty,” and that he was as simple in his great fortune as he had been courageous in his toil.

‘All whom he employed, his clerks, who became his friends, will tell you better than I can with what solicitude he cherished their well-being, and endeavoured to be of service to them. Possessed of a mind as intellectually superior as it was sincerely philanthropical, he surrounded himself with all that elevates and ameliorates. He liked arts and letters, and en-

couraged them without show of affectation; and familiarly acquainted with all the delicate emotions of a noble heart, both his hands were ever outstretched to the unfortunate, and he lent new value to his charity by the way in which he dispensed it.

Surrounded with tender care of every kind, and blessed with the love of a devoted wife, sure of the esteem of his friends, confidently relying on the gratitude of his *employés* and servants, he might, up to his dying day, have led a happy life, had not the health of one dear to him beyond all others caused him grave anxiety. It is a sad blow to his son not to be able to be present at this ceremony.

‘It is but a few weeks ago that M. Boucicaut, under the influence of some presentiment, passing in review, in the presence of a friend, his whole life, pronounced these memorable words, which are touching in their simplicity:

“I can die now, for I have worked and laboured for the good of all; and when I look about me I see that all my family, all whom I love, all who come near to me, are happy!”

‘Gentlemen, this life to which I am endeavouring to render homage was a noble one; let us all cherish the memory thereof, and all do our best to imitate it.’

Such is the story of a noble success nobly won and nobly used. How do you think posterity will appreciate Aristide Boucicaut? Do you think it will merely remark him as a man who, having sprung from nothing, rose in a comparatively short time, and by his own unassisted labour and intelligence, to the enjoyment of a large fortune? No; many have performed this miracle; and as industry from day to day becomes more widely developed, the class

of self-made men will become larger. Posterity will rather point out Aristide Boucicaut as a man whose secret of success was that he ever thought more of others than of himself, and as one who sanctified his success by using it for the good of his fellow-beings. This is the lesson to be learnt from the career of the Bon

Marché king, whose death will be deplored so long as men can appreciate intelligence and success, and reverence charity and self-sacrifice. Even to-day his friends cannot speak of him without tears rising to their eyes.

'Alas for them, though not for thee!
They cannot choose, but weep the more;
Deep for the dead the grief must be,
Who ne'er gave cause to weep before !'

DARK OR LIGHT BLUE ?

HER brothers were both down at Oxford,
At Cambridge her lover had been ;
With him she's to go to the Boat-race—
The first one that she had e'er seen.

Her brothers wrote, 'Put on our colour ;'
Her heart wanted Cambridge to win ;
And her lover stood laughing softly
At the puzzle her mind was in.

'Now what shall I do, pray ?' she asked him :
'I long to wear Cambridge for you ;
But the boys will never forgive me,
If I don not the Oxford blue.'

'Then wear it, my darling—be happy ;
The boys will be pleased, and I too :
Though your dress be the Oxford colour,
Your eyes will remain Cambridge blue.'

ARTHUR CAMVILLE.

MRS. LANCASTER'S RIVAL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS IN HER OWN CHATEAU.'

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DRIVE.

THE next day the sun shone over Pensand. It was an uncertain day; the air was much warmer, every distant point stood out clearly; and as the morning wore on great masses of white clouds rose in the south and south-west, and began to climb slowly up the sky. But these threatenings did not trouble Mabel. She was quite ready to enjoy the present; it was delightful to walk in the garden again without an umbrella; to be in an atmosphere of blue and gold instead of misty gray; to gather rosebuds, even to mourn over the beauties fallen, and lying in soft curling pink or creamy heaps upon the damp grass. The books Randal had brought for her were unpacked, and their bright bindings gave quite a modern and cheerful air to the drawing-room. They looked interesting, but Randal would not let her sit down to read.

'Keep them for wet days, when I am not here,' he said; 'I did not bring them to entertain you when you ought to be entertaining me. I am not so unselfish.'

'It is very nice to be unselfish,' said Mabel.

'No! You don't really think so, do you? Why, unselfish people are the greatest bores to themselves and everybody else.'

'I don't know what you mean.'

'Well, if you come into a room where an unselfish man is sitting in front of the fire, up he jumps

to make way for you. He only makes you feel uncomfortable. You don't want his place. You would much rather that he stayed where he was. I'm not speaking of a lady, of course; she ought to feel no scruple in taking the best place in the room; but of myself. Horrid bore! If he would have let you alone, you could have edged yourself in and warmed your feet. As he makes all this row, you are obliged to sit down yards away and say you are not cold.'

'Is that what you do?' said Mabel.

'Well, to confess the truth, I generally take his place, simply to punish him, in the hope that he may know better next time, and keep what he has got.'

'You ought to take care what you say to me,' said Mabel gravely, after a pause.

'Why?'

'Because I believe every word of it.'

Randal looked at her, suddenly interested.

'Do you? I can't wish for anything better. Always believe what I say to you, and I shall be satisfied.'

But that quiet remark of hers had an effect upon him that would have surprised her if she could have understood it. This girl was not quite blind, not quite a poor fool, who would do nothing but admire him, and be honoured by any preference that he might choose to show her. Well, he was glad of it. It made the game a little more interesting, and he

could hardly fail to win it in the end.

After luncheon, the day being still fine, he and she and his father strolled round to the stables. Randal had his own horse brought out for her to see, a beautiful silky-coated black. He was getting old, he said, so he did no London work, but lived in comfort down here, and never had anything behind him but a light dog-cart. Then Randal walked out into the middle of the yard and looked up at the sky.

'Is it going to be fine, Jenkins?'

'There may be a storm, sir, but not before evening, I expect,' said the groom.

'Miss Ashley, we might make a little round this afternoon if you are inclined. I'll have the Turk put in at once.'

Mabel's eyes brightened, but she turned towards the General.

'Unless you are afraid to trust yourself to Randal's driving?' said he.

'I am not the least afraid,' said Mabel. 'I should like it very much.'

So away she drove with Randal in the dog-cart, Jenkins sitting behind. The wild stormy clouds, the strange gleams of colour in the sky, only made the country more beautiful. Dark shadows fell across the distant purple moors; then the sun broke out over them in a long trail of yellow light. There was a moaning wind, and the air was heavy and sultry. The Turk pricked his ears nervously as he trotted along. It was past the middle of July, and the wild roses and honeysuckle were gone; but there were plenty of flowers in the hedges still, fox-gloves and great moon daisies, and scarlet poppies looking out of the cornfields. They drove round under hills crested with fir-trees,

where heather and gorse were in bloom, and ferns clothed all the lower ground; then through romantic lanes that kept Mabel exclaiming with admiration. At last they came down into a village at the head of a valley, with a gray square-towered church and a large old house within walls close by.

'This is Carweston,' said Randal.

'O, please drive slowly, and let me look at it,' said Mabel.

He obeyed, with a slight lazy smile, and Mabel turned her head in all directions, thinking she might catch sight of her friend Anthony; but he was not to be seen.

'What a pretty old house!'

'The rooms are very low, and stuffed with rubbish,' said Randal. 'Anthony Strange is squire and parson, you know; that is his house. The whole place belongs to him. Imagine being buried alive here in the midst of the lanes.'

'O, but it is a charming place,' said Mabel.

'So you thought Pensand, the first time I saw you there.'

'And so I think it still. I am not so changeable.'

'No. But Nature is not enough for you. You must have human beings. You would really be happiest in London.'

'I can't bear London. I was wretched there.'

'At school, of course. But in a house of your own. Well, do you wish to stop and speak to that old lady, or shall we pass her like a shot?'

'Is it Mrs. Strange? Stop, please,' said Mabel decidedly.

Mrs. Strange was just coming out of a cottage garden, and looked in some surprise when they pulled up close to her. Jenkins went to the horse's head, and

Randal jumped down and spoke to her very politely. Her manner to him was rather cold, but she glanced up and met Mabel's earnest wistful eyes, as she leaned forward, forgetting that she was a stranger, to claim a greeting from Anthony's mother.

Perhaps at first sight there was not so much ready sympathy in Mrs. Strange as in Anthony; she had lived in the world, and knew its ways, and generally made sure that her friendship was deserved before she gave it. Mabel Ashley driving alone with Randal Hawke was a disagreeable sight, and would have made Anthony very angry. If the girl could amuse herself in this way, be happy thus, there was no need to pity her any more. But meeting Mabel's eyes full and straight, before she spoke, Mrs. Strange was softened in spite of herself. Randal introduced them, and she kindly pressed the small hand that was stretched out to her.

'Where are you and Miss Ashley going?' she said to Randal. 'Won't you come in?'

'You are very kind,' Randal answered. 'But we are going back by St. Denys, and I am afraid of the weather. We must not stay to-day, I think.'

He knew that Mabel was disappointed, but would not look at her.

'Remember, I expect you to come and see me some day,' said Mrs. Strange to her. 'My son has told you so, I think.'

'O yes, I wish I could,' said Mabel. 'Is Mr. Strange quite well? He has not been at Pensand for so long.'

'He is away,' said Mrs. Strange. 'I expect him back to-night.'

Randal did not seem inclined to stay any longer. He answered Mrs. Strange's inquiry for the General, and then they drove on,

Mabel turning her head to look back at Carweston and the little lady in the road.

'How long is it since Anthony Strange paid you a visit, Miss Ashley?' said Randal.

'About a week.'

'He will be flattered. I should like to be so much missed. But I suppose he amuses you with his odd absurd ways.'

'I don't know whether he amuses me. I like him very much,' said Mabel quietly.

'Well, there often is a good deal to be liked about those enthusiastic sort of fellows,' said Randal. 'Only they are disappointing, you see. One can't depend on them for more than two days together. They don't know what steadiness means.'

'How do you mean?'

'Why, Anthony would tell you that you must not expect too much from genius. You must be thankful if it admires you and sympathises with you for a month. Then you must be prepared to make way for somebody else, for of course it can't endure monotony. Don't look horrified. It is an old story. Anthony is always wild about somebody. It is better for you to know that, so that you may not take the trouble to miss him when he vanishes.'

'But I can't believe all that of Mr. Strange. He has been so kind to me,' said Mabel.

'I know he has. And of course he quite meant it all at the time. Now don't be angry with me. Don't think me a cold-blooded wretch for telling you this.'

'But you never liked him, did you?' suggested Mabel.

'O dear, yes; and long after I understood him. But one does lose patience with that sort of thing at last,' said Randal.

Different turnings had brought

them to that same road where Dick had found Flora one afternoon, standing by the wall.

To-day all the distant hills were shrouded in dark heavy thunder-clouds, the high ground on the opposite river-bank stood out purple and sharp and very near, the water lay gleaming with a red lurid light from the sky. Then a vivid flash divided the clouds, and for an instant all the river and its banks were in a blaze. The roll of thunder followed almost immediately, rattling among the hills. Then a flood of heavy rain rushed down, suddenly veiling river and hills and everything in the lower ground. On the road they only felt a few drops of it, but the storm was passing up the valley, and in another minute would be upon them. Randal touched his horse with the whip, and they flew along down the road.

'I am not hurrying into the storm,' he explained to Mabel; 'but there is a place just below here where we can take shelter. That rain would wet you through in no time.'

He pulled up at a cottage on the right-hand side of the road, jumped down, helped Mabel down, and told Jenkins to put the dog-cart into a shed close by.

'We want shelter from the storm, Mrs. Sale,' he said to a woman, who came forward to the door.

'You're welcome, sir, and you're only just in time,' said the woman, bringing forward a chair for Mabel.

Mabel thought she had seldom seen a more painful face, gray and stony and expressionless, with cold eyes that looked as if there was nothing worth living for. But she was half frightened by the dazzle of lightning that just then filled the room. And then

the noise of thunder, and the pelting rain, which now began dancing on the doorstep and pouring in a stream down the road, took her thoughts quite away from Mrs. Sale's face. She was sitting in an old-fashioned wooden armchair. She leaned forward, and shaded her eyes with her hand.

'Can't we go into the parlour?' she heard Randal's voice saying through the din.

'As you please, sir; but there's some one there already,' answered Mrs. Sale, with a peculiar tone in her voice.

Randal paused a moment. Then he walked across the room and pushed open a door. A few words were exchanged with the person inside, so low that Mabel could not hear them. At last Randal said, 'Come and talk to her;' and then she felt that somebody came and stood by her chair, and heard a low sweet voice, with a great deal of feeling in it, saying gently, 'Does the storm frighten you?'

Mabel raised her eyes, and saw the original of that photograph in Randal's book standing fair and smiling by her side—the woman whom Dick Northcote ought to have married, who had had so many troubles, and looked all the sweeter for them.

Flora Lancaster was not a woman who generally took to girls, or inspired them with confidence in her, but for some reason her manner to Mabel that day was curiously soft and charming. Mabel thought her new acquaintance lovely, and that thunder-storm the luckiest thing that could have happened.

'Do come into the parlour,' Flora said. 'There are comfortable chairs in it, and you look so tired. Have you been for a very long drive?'

'O no,' said Mabel, smiling. 'I am not tired at all; only I don't like this weather.'

'Rain always depresses you, doesn't it?' said Randal, meeting her eyes with a smile which brought colour into her pale cheeks.

Flora took her hand, and they went together into the inner room, a little snugger which did Mrs. Sale credit. As to that worthy woman, she did not concern herself about them, but went back to her work in the kitchen.

Mabel enjoyed the next half hour much more than people of good taste and breeding, such as Mrs. Strange and Miss Northcote, would have thought allowable or possible. But there were a great many excuses for her. Anthony, perhaps, with a man's larger view, would have confessed that. Her companions had plenty of cleverness, as well as good looks, and seemed bent on amusing her, and making the time pass quickly. They were on very intimate terms with each other; but as they avoided Christian names, it did not occur to Mabel to wonder at that.

Once, when Randal was gone out to look at the weather, Flora said to her, 'I have not been introduced to you, Miss Ashley. May I ask if you know who I am?'

'O yes,' said Mabel; 'you are Mrs. Lancaster. They have your photograph at the Castle. I knew you directly.'

'Really! Is it in a book?'

'Yes; in Mr. Hawke's book.'

'Pensand is a beautiful old place, isn't it?' said Flora.

'O, lovely, especially in fine weather. One is rather dull sometimes when it rains. Nobody ever comes there except Mr. Strange, and Mr. Hawke, of course, now and then.'

As Mabel mentioned Anthony's

name, she remembered with a little pain what Randal had said about him; she could not think it was true. But it was no use tormenting herself about that now.

'I don't know whether I may ask you,' said Mabel, with her dark wistful eyes fixed on Flora; 'but if you would come and see me sometimes, I should be so very glad.'

'Thank you,' said Flora, rather gravely. Then, as Randal came in, she turned to him, and spoke with a shade of abruptness that Mabel did not understand. 'Miss Ashley says she would like me to come and see her. What do you think?'

Randal for once in his life looked a little confused.

'I think that I should like it just as much as Miss Ashley would,' he said. 'But we are not the only people to be consulted. My father, you know, has the oddest fancies about visitors.'

But Mabel had her fancies too, and this was a new and strong one. Her lonely little soul, disappointed several times of expected sympathy, seemed to find it at last in Flora Lancaster's soft manners and blue eyes.

'O, but if you ask the General he won't refuse you,' she said eagerly. 'And you said—'

'What did I say?' said Randal, as she stopped.

'You said you wanted me to be happy,' said Mabel, colouring a little.

Flora looked from one to the other and smiled.

'So I do,' said Randal. 'And from my long acquaintance with Mrs. Lancaster, I can tell you that you are quite right. We will see what we can do with the General. Now, I'm very sorry; but do you know that the sun is coming out?'

CHAPTER XIV.

THE END OF THE DRIVE.

RANDAL HAWKE was certainly a clever man. When he chose to be liked he generally was liked, in spite of any former prejudice that people might have had against him. They generally began with a prejudice, for the first impression of him was nearly always unpleasant. It depended on himself whether he chose to take the trouble of doing away with that impression. With Mabel Ashley, having once determined to make himself agreeable to her, he was perfect. Long afterwards she remembered that drive, and wondered what made her enjoy it so much, especially the latter part of it, after she had made friends with Mrs. Lancaster, and had smiled farewell to her as she stood at the cottage-door.

Perhaps the wonderful beauty of that afternoon had something to do with it; the brilliancy of that stormy sunshine; the wild heaps of clouds, with their marvellous colours, that lay crowded on the horizon; the flashing water; the scarlet glow of flowers in the St. Denys gardens; the blue sky and the sharp dark shadows. As they turned up the steep street of St. Denys, Mabel looked down over the broad blue harbour with its many ships, and steamers with their trails of smoke passing swiftly by. A gun boomed out from a distant fort; a long line of Morebay buildings, shadowed the moment before by a cloud, came suddenly out into sunshine; there was a distant noise of ship-building; shouts far off on the water; the whistle of a train as it approached the long curved bridge. All was life and work and beauty, and a wonderful feeling of happiness came over Mabel as they

drove along. She looked kindly at the little dark-eyed children who were playing in the streets, and listened with interest to all Randal was saying. She had begun by telling him how much she admired Mrs. Lancaster.

'Yes, she is very pretty,' said Randal, 'and very well preserved, considering all she has gone through. But we may hope that none of it cut very deep.'

'Her husband's death, do you mean?' said Mabel, rather startled.

'I don't mean that she has no heart. Rather too much for her own peace, on the contrary. But she shows good taste, don't you see, not to be inconsolable for the loss of a fellow like Lancaster. She ought never to have married him. A fellow in a long coat and a choker, without two ideas in his head.'

'Was he like that? What a pity! Why did she marry him?' said Mabel.

'Partly from spite. She meant to marry Dick Northcote, but he took himself off to New Zealand.'

'Marry for spite! What a reason!' said Mabel. 'General Hawke told me something about that. It was sad for her, poor thing.'

'It may come right after all,' said Randal. 'Dick still admires her; he let that out to me the other day. So she may end by marrying for the same reason that you would.'

Mabel looked up rather wonderingly; she was a little absent, and did not quite understand him.

'For love, I hope,' he said, in a very low voice, looking at her.

Something at that moment, she did not know why, reminded Mabel of Dick Northcote's eyes one day at the Castle, when he had tried to make peace with her across the tea-table. Little Mabel

was growing up, and her experiences were multiplying. She thought, however, that Randal was more to be trusted than Dick, that horrid flirt who had made poor Mrs. Lancaster unhappy. Not that she attached much meaning to Randal's look just then. She smiled, blushed a little, and answered, 'O, yes, I hope so,' very gently and innocently.

As they drove through St. Denys Randal showed her Captain Cardew's house, with its garden full of roses and jasmine, and presently Miss Northcote's, standing high up in the sunshine, with that wonderful view spread out before it.

Kate Northcote herself was just going in at her door. She bowed rather distantly, and looked after them as they passed on up the lane, thinking of Anthony and his opinion of Randal. Mabel Ashley looked quite happy beside him, she thought.

'I don't really think,' was Kate's conclusion, 'that we need concern ourselves about that girl. She belongs to those people, and is evidently contented with them. Anthony's prejudices are so very strong.'

'Miss Northcote came to see me once, but she has never been again,' said Mabel to her companion. 'I suppose I ought to call on her if I could.'

'I'm glad you are so sociably inclined,' said Randal. 'It is a thousand pities my father does not agree with you. But when I come down again we will see what we can do. Did you take any fancy to Miss Northcote?'

'I am not sure that I did,' said Mabel. 'O, I ought not to say that, for I really don't know her at all. I daresay she is very nice indeed.'

'She is nice in her way—according to her lights,' said Randal,

smiling. 'But she has fearful disadvantages. She belongs to one of the oldest families in this part of England, she has lived all her life in that house at St. Denys, and though she has a long-standing flirtation with Anthony Strange, she has not, you see, succeeded in marrying him. So don't be shocked if I describe her as a rather proud, rather narrow-minded, rather provincial old maid.'

'O, but I am shocked,' said Mabel. 'I thought her so very handsome and ladylike.'

'So she is; you are quite right. She was a beauty in her day, and I don't know a more distinguished-looking woman. But I never allow myself to be prejudiced, and I have come to those other conclusions after long acquaintance,' said Randal.

'You really don't seem to admire anybody,' said Mabel.

'I prefer the charming unconsciousness which does not realise its right to be admired,' replied Randal.

There was something in this speech that silenced Mabel, though it did not make her enjoy her drive any the less, or feel anything but sorry when it was over, and she was helped down from her high seat and taken into the house with a care which was almost tenderness.

Randal soon followed Mabel into the drawing-room after dinner that night. He found her a little disconsolate, shut out from the summer evening by shutters and curtains; so he opened one of the windows, and they stood there in the shadow on the threshold, looking out into a fairy scene, a flood of soft still moonlight. It was one of those times in which one feels one ought to be very happy, and longs instinctively for some dear friend far away to

stand there and enjoy it too ; a time when the happiest people feel that little restless discontent which comes in the face of Nature's greatest beauty.

Mabel was not one of the happiest of people, and just then she felt very lonely, very sad, as if she wanted something so much, and did not know what it was. There were tears, though Randal could not see them, in the eyes which were gazing into that dream-distance. He knew, however, what women and sentimental people generally felt on these occasions, and there was no danger of his saying a discordant word. He walked out into the moonlight, and his clear handsome face looked handsomer than ever.

'Don't come out,' he said, 'the ground is damp. I'm so sorry, but I have something disagreeable to tell you. Do try not to be too much disappointed.'

He came back and stood by Mabel's side, looking at her anxiously. Mabel thought nobody could be kinder ; there was so much real regret in his voice. All the sharpness which she had disliked at first seemed to have disappeared for ever.

'Old people are so peculiar,' he went on. 'I don't believe, do you know, that it is only old men. Old ladies are just the same. Shall we pray never to grow old, you and I ?'

'I would rather not die just yet, though,' said Mabel, 'if you don't mind.'

'I should think not. There is plenty to live for, just at present. Only don't let us live to be a torment to other people.'

'But why?' said Mabel. 'What is it? Tell me, and I'll try not to be disappointed.'

'I have been asking my father about Mrs. Lancaster coming here,' said Randal. 'He won't

have it at all. He says that she never has been received into society here, and he does not wish to set the example. I represented to him what nonsense all that was, but in vain.'

'O dear ! but I am not society,' said Mabel. She was disappointed, and she sighed rather drearily. 'The days are so long,' she said, 'when you are not here.'

'Poor dear Mabel!' said Randal softly, as if he was thinking aloud. 'No, I don't see that you need be described as "society." But you are, you know, and Mrs. Lancaster isn't. Undefinable, but true. Tell me again that the days are long when I am not here. I like to hear it.'

His manner was so perfectly quiet and unexcited that the words hardly struck Mabel as anything remarkable.

'They are, of course,' she said, 'because I am alone, and have not much to do.'

'Don't spoil the compliment. Did you hear me call you Mabel just now? Were you angry ?'

'No.'

'Don't you think, considering everything, we know each other well enough to dispense with Miss Ashley and Mr. Hawke? Your father and mine were like brothers, and I think you and I might at least be intimate friends. Don't you ?'

The allusion to her father would have touched Mabel's heart, even if she had not liked Randal himself so much. But he was fast winning his way, this young man, who seemed to care for her and think of her happiness so much more than anybody else did. She smiled, and said, 'O yes!' without any hesitation.

'Then just say a few words to close our bargain. Say "I am sorry you are going away to-morrow, Randal."'

She repeated the words at once, simply and like a child.

'Thank you, Mabel. So am I; but I hope to be here very soon again.'

It was such an odd little scene, ended the next minute by the appearance of General Hawke, rather cross and sleepy.

When Mabel woke in the morning, her first idea was that she had dreamt it all. But the maid was standing by her bedside, holding in her arms the prettiest white Persian kitten, with long downy hair and plaintive hazel eyes. Round its neck was a blue ribbon, with a note tied to it.

'Mr. Randal was obliged to leave early, miss,' said the maid, 'but he told me to give you this kitten.'

Mabel took the creature into her arms at once, untied the note, read it, and knew that yesterday evening was a reality. There were only these three words: 'With Randal's love.'

CHAPTER XV.

ANTHONY AND THE BOOKS.

It certainly did seem ill-natured of General Hawke to have refused to let Mrs. Lancaster pay Mabel a visit. Perhaps he felt this himself, for that day, after Randal was gone, his manner to her was kinder than ever.

'Let me look at you, my dear,' he said after breakfast, taking Mabel's hand with a pleasant smile. 'You certainly are fatter than when you first came. I believe Pensand agrees with you, after all. How do you feel?'

Mabel, with her new pet purring on her shoulder, was quite ready to answer cheerfully that she felt very well.

'That's right,' said the General.

'We should do very well here if we always had Randal. He has no notion of being dull. We miss him, don't we?'

'Yes, very much,' said Mabel truthfully.

Randal was a person whose absence always would be felt, either as a blank or a relief. To Mabel in her new-made friendship it was quite a loss to go about the house without meeting him, to take up the books he had left behind him, and feel that he was not there. Perhaps he did not always talk nicely about other people; but he really seemed to care for her. Poor lonely Mabel! Randal in his position had a great advantage there.

The white fluffy kitten and those books in their bright new bindings occupied that day pleasantly enough. Mabel took them out into the garden, and sat in the loveliest corner of the lawn, that same corner where Dick had found her one afternoon, and had been so much enraged by her reception of him. He was a stupid man, thought Mabel, remembering it. But then she felt very sorry, and hated herself, and wondered if he would really marry Mrs. Lancaster, and if by any chance she would ever see him again. Not that she wished to see him—but, O dear, how one might be deceived and disappointed in people! If ever a man seemed honest and truthful, it was Dick Northcote, and yet he was really quite horrid. How could people help getting into scrapes in such a world? After all, it might be best to be shut up safely here at Pensand, with the General to watch that no harm came to her, and with Randal—yes, with Randal—to be just like a kind brother to her. At any rate, these two really cared about her, and she might depend on

them. After bringing herself to this wise conclusion, Mabel plunged into Randal's books.

Here she found herself in a strange world. In some country far away, a calm blue sea rippled up in little curling waves, silver foam on golden sand. Beautiful creatures, like Greek statues come to life, wandered about or lay dreaming in the sunshine. It appeared to be the present time, and yet, according to this writer's fancy, no shadow of Christianity, or even morality, had come to trouble this gentle pagan world. These people had no laws, no duties, no objects, except to preserve their beautiful selves, and to enjoy the world they were in. One supposes that they did not believe in immortality; certainly they did not deserve it. But they were represented as so happy, so humanly perfect in their selfish existence, that it was impossible to be angry with them. The lives of these lovely Communists were made strangely real by their modern names and the way they talked. It seemed at first possible that human beings might live such a life, and even a wise man might read on smiling through volumes of this poetical stuff, so charmingly told were the stories, so satisfying to one side of human nature, before he knew that it was all horrible, that

'Thinner than the subtlest lawn
'Twixt him and death the veil was drawn;' that these creatures, who boasted of being so natural, were fearful in their unnaturalness, risen up as they were, clothed in light, from the black depths of the old pagan world. But as a wise man might have taken a little time to come to this conclusion, it is not surprising that for two days Mabel read on with a sort of delighted wonder, fascinated by the strange beauty of these books.

Her enjoyment of them came to rather a sudden end. Towards the evening of the second day, she had been called in to tea, and had left her chair and a pile of books in her favourite nook of the lawn, just out of sight from the windows. Anthony Strange, making his usual short cut through the garden, came on these traces of his young friend.

'She will be back directly,' he said to himself. 'What has the child got to amuse her?'

He took up one of the volumes, turned over a few pages; then sat down in Mabel's chair, and was absorbed for about ten minutes. At the end of this time he was frowning terribly.

'Who can have given her such books as these?' he said.

He held the books very tight for a moment, and looked round at the waving trees, the roses, all the beautiful distant tints of river and wood and sea. They gave him no answer, but a sweet fresh breeze came blowing up, and tried to ruffle the offending leaves which he was holding down so sternly.

'Talk of poison!' said Anthony. 'Paper and printer's ink make the surest kind. Which is worse, to kill the body or the soul? What should I do if I found this child drinking laudanum? Break the bottle, as I tear you, poisonous leaves.'

Poor, peaceful, selfish pagans! This angry Christian began at once tearing out the pages of the volume in his hand, crumpling them up, and throwing them aside in a dishonoured heap. From one volume he went to another. Three or four had been destroyed in this way, when footsteps and a voice came towards him across the lawn.

'Come along, Fluffy dear,' said Mabel. 'Haven't you had cream enough? I'm sure you ought to be just as happy as those people

in the books, who went on eating grapes as long as they liked, and slept among the flowers. Don't you wish we were there too, Fluffy? What a world it was!

She came round a blooming rosebush, her kitten dancing after her, with a smile and a little colour in her face. Then she stood still and stared in amazement. There was Anthony in her chair, his plain face made quite ugly by indignation, his lank awkward figure a contrast indeed to the proportions of those heroes whose history he had been so jealously tearing up. There he sat, in the midst of the tattered volumes, and as Mabel looked at him he actually stripped the back off another victim.

'O Mr. Strange!' cried Mabel, her voice shrill with fright and anger. 'What are you doing? What *are* you doing?'

Anthony got up, threw the book on the grass, and came forward to meet her with both hands outstretched.

'My dear child, I am only breaking poison-bottles,' he said.

But Mabel was not ready to give him her hands. She joined them together, and quite wrung them in her distress. Her eyes filled with tears of anger and vexation.

'I don't know what you mean,' she said. 'O, how could you!'

'A cat, too!' cried Anthony, as Fluffy came forward and stared at him curiously. 'Who has been doing all this frightful mischief? What has happened to you? Why do I find everything changed?'

'Nothing is changed. This is my kitten,' said Mabel, catching Fluffy up into her arms for comfort. 'O dear, why are you tearing up my books? They are so beautiful, and I shall have nothing to read, nothing to do, nothing!'

Mabel's voice broke into a sob. But she remembered that she was grown up, and that it was very childish to cry. So she swallowed her tears resolutely, and looked at Anthony with reproachful eyes, waiting for some explanation. He was not at all ready to be ashamed of himself, though he could have cried too to see her in such distress.

'Don't let me hear you call those books beautiful,' he said. 'They are horrible heathen nonsense, which nobody ought to read, least of all a girl like you. Good heavens! After a course of those, your moral sense would be completely destroyed. Beautiful! No one who cared for true beauty could help doing as I have done—destroying the evil stuff on the spot.'

'O, but they were not yours.'

'Nor yours, I trust,' said Anthony. 'But I don't care whose they are. If they belonged to the Queen, I should do just the same.'

'You couldn't,' said Mabel. 'And they are mine; they were given to me. It was very kind. I did want something to amuse me.'

'What an awful state of things this is!' said Anthony. 'Who gave them to you?'

'Randal,' answered Mabel, after a moment's hesitation.

Then she sat down, buried her face in Fluffy's white fur, and cried a little; she really could not help it.

'Randal! We have come to this already,' said Anthony aloud, but he was not speaking to her.

For several minutes he stood motionless, with his arms folded, gazing at her. The wind caught a few of the scattered leaves and danced them off across the lawn, but neither he nor Mabel looked after them. He had forgotten

all about them, for his mind was quite full of one person—Randal—whom he hated with most unclerical thoroughness.

Anthony was not in the least conscious of his own odd looks, and this fact generally made other people forget them too. Mabel had never thought of them when he and she were friends. Now that she was angry with him she began to compare him in her mind with everybody else, with Dick, with Randal, with those perfect creatures in her lost books. And yet there was a little self-reproach running through it all.

'Mabel,' said Anthony at last, with a pathetic tone in his voice that would have touched any one who really knew him, 'can't you do me justice? Can't you see why I destroyed those books of yours? There are thousands more of them in the world. I don't buy them all and tear them up—though that would be as grand a mission in life as a man could have. But don't you know why I tore up these?'

'No,' said Mabel obstinately. 'They were only amusing. They did not do me any harm.'

'You could not read them without harm,—but that is not exactly the question,' said Anthony. 'Why should I interfere with you? Why should I tear up your books, and not other people's?'

'I don't know,' said Mabel dismally.

Anthony saw that his offence was almost unpardonable. He stood looking at her in the saddest perplexity. It did not occur to him that Randal might have tried to set her against him; if it had, he would not have believed that his little friend, with whom he had sympathised so heartily, could be influenced in any such way; but he did see that Randal

was doing his best to make Mabel like him and look to him for amusement, and perhaps the good Anthony was a little unreasonable in his anger. Anybody would have said that such a course was only right and natural in General Hawke's son; but he was Randal, and so in Anthony's eyes it could be only villany. His one idea was to save Mabel. As he stood there, looking down at the sad little dark head bowed over the kitten, the damp drooping eyelids, the whole attitude that of a miserable and rather sulky child among her ruined playthings—those unfortunate books that lay round her in various stages of destruction—a great pity rose up in Anthony's heart, and though he could not wish the books whole again, he felt himself a cruel monster. He had been very hard, and had spoken roughly to her, this poor lonely desolate child. How was she, with no experience, to know her friends from her enemies, either in books or men?

'There is only one way,' thought Anthony. 'I am sure of it now. I must be very careful and quiet and reasonable.'

'Mabel,' he said, 'you are very angry with me. I made you so; it is my own fault. But think a moment, and then perhaps you will be able to forgive me. Why should I care whether you read such books as those or not?'

There was the same strange beauty in Anthony's voice as he spoke that Mabel had noticed when he read prayers, on the morning of their first acquaintance. It came when he spoke, as he seldom did out of church, from the very depths of his heart, from a quiet region beyond all anger, however righteous, beyond all prejudice, however well founded and strong. Mabel was touched, and could not resist it. She looked

up with her tearful eyes, smiled, though rather faintly, and held out her hand to Anthony.

'O, I'm sure you had some good reason,' she said, in a depressed voice. 'It is wrong of me to care about the books, I daresay. Please forgive me for being so silly.'

Anthony caught the little hand and held it fast.

'O Mabel, my child, little you know about it!' he said. 'Some good reason! The same reason that has haunted me ever since I met you in the field that morning—strong when I am with you; stronger still when I am away from you, and know the bad influences that I leave you among. Because I must take care of you; you are not safe away from me. Mabel, do you feel that too?'

'I don't quite understand,' said Mabel softly. 'Every one is good to me, though perhaps no one is quite so good as you. But you think I am unhappy, and I really am not. The General is very kind indeed, and so is Ran—'

'Don't say it!' cried Anthony impatiently. 'When *did* you begin to call him that?'

'Only the day before yesterday,' said Mabel, in some astonishment.

'You did not like that man at first. Why do you like him now?'

'Because he has been so nice to me. I couldn't dislike him if I wished,' said Mabel decidedly.

Anthony hardly knew what to say. His hating Randal was perhaps hardly a sufficient reason for Mabel's hating him too. After all, it would not so much matter if this dawning preference could be checked in time.

'Mabel, you don't understand,' he said. 'Let me explain to you. As to Randal Hawke, I won't

pretend to judge him. We won't talk about him now. Will you let me put an end to all this trouble—to your loneliness, my child? Will you come to my home, and let me take care of you there—always?'

Mabel did not at first know what he meant. If she had ever dreamt of a lover, he certainly was not the least like Anthony Strange, so much older than herself, and wearing spectacles. The idea was almost too astonishing. She stared at him gravely without speaking, and thought he must be offering her a home with his mother out of the kindness of his heart, and because he could not feel happy about her where she was. This idea seemed reasonable; the other was absurd.

'But Mrs. Strange would not like it, perhaps,' she said, in a low voice. 'And I don't think the General would let me go. O no, thank you; it is no use thinking about it.'

'I would manage the General,' said Anthony eagerly. 'Yes, no doubt he would object; but he has no real authority over you. As to my mother, I believe she only wants you to make her the very happiest woman in the world. She likes you already; if you were her daughter, she would love you dearly. Say yes, then, Mabel. You are my first love, dear, and certainly my last.'

He *did* mean it, then. Was ever anything so extraordinary? He must be fifty, at least, thought Mabel in her consternation. Poor dear Mr. Strange, he had been so charming till to-day! Why must he spoil all by saying this? She turned her head away, and gazed at the blue line of sea so far off. 'O, if I was in a ship hundreds of miles away!' thought Mabel. The kitten in her lap was playing with one of her hands; she be-

came painfully conscious that Anthony was still holding the other. What was she to say? What words could she use to tell him how impossible this was? Randal might be wrong in some things, but he was certainly right when he said one should marry for love. Mr. Strange could not really be in love with her. O no, he was too old, too odd; it was only pity and kindness. Mabel had too much tact, however, to use this argument with him.

Something must be said; she could not sit there for ever, and let him hold her hand. She put down the kitten on the grass and got up, freeing herself by the sudden movement. Then she looked at Anthony, bravely meeting the earnest expression of his eyes. His face changed a little; for of course it was easy to see that there was no hope for him. Anthony, with his power of sympathy, was not likely to fail in understanding the one girl he cared for, and there was no selfishness in his love.

'You don't like me enough, then, Mabel?' he said gently.

'It is not that,' said Mabel. 'I like you very much. But I never thought—and I can't—'

'Does that make it impossible that you ever should?'

'Yes. O, don't you see,' said Mabel, with a sudden appeal to the friendliness that had never failed her yet, 'if I did, it would be just for home, and to be taken care of, and all that? It could not be anything but that—'

She stopped short, blushing scarlet. Anthony did not speak for a moment, and a look of pain passed over his face; but then he smiled at her as kindly as ever.

'Yes, my child; I see—I understand. That would not be enough, as you say. Very well. I won't speak of myself or my

wishes any more. Only this, Mabel: if you ever do want a home, Carweston is your home. The tenderest friendship is not such a bad foundation, and something else would grow up afterwards; so if you ever change your mind about what I have asked you to-day, and will give me the smallest sign of it, remember that with me change is impossible.'

This was a curious commentary on Randal's character of Anthony Strange.

'We will keep it all to ourselves, if you don't mind,' he said. 'You have nobody that you will care to tell, and no one shall hear of it from me. I shall come here just as usual. You will let me do that, Mabel?'

'O, I hope you will,' said Mabel, thinking at the same time that his coming did not depend much on her.

All the excitement was gone from his manner; he turned aside, and began picking up the scattered remains of gay bindings, large print, and broad margins with which the grass was strewn. Mabel watched him with a dismal countenance. When he looked at her, the words suddenly came out, 'What will Randal say?'

'Tell him it was me, and then let him come to me and say what he pleases,' answered Anthony. 'I am a clergyman, you know. I can bear anything.'

Then with rather a sad smile he shook hands with her, said good-bye, and walked away down the grassy slope among the roses, leaving Mabel alone to meditate on her first offer.

Marry old Anthony Strange! live at Carweston! Life had much brighter possibilities than that; so Mabel very naturally thought at nineteen. And Randal was of course quite right when he said one should marry for love.

CHAPTER XVI.

A VISIT TO MABEL.

FLORA LANCASTER would have been angry, perhaps, if any one had told her that a little uneasiness was mixed with the curiosity that went on growing in her mind, through the days after her meeting with Randal Hawke and Mabel Ashley. She heard nothing from Randal about her going to Pensand or staying away. He probably thought that she would not dream of going without leave from him, but here he reckoned a little too much on her submissiveness. Of course there had been till now no question of her going to the Castle: she could not keep too far away; but now that this splendid excuse presented itself in the shape of a girl staying there, who was anxious to make her acquaintance, it was very hard for Flora to resist the temptation.

She had never seen the Castle, some day to be her home, except, from the river or the other side of the Combe, a few gray walls and battlements rising above the trees. She longed to go through the rooms once, to see what it was all like, so as to gain a little reality for her dreams of the future. Her patience and prudence, which had been so wonderful, were inclined to give way when this opportunity offered itself.

There could be no great harm in it. General Hawke, though he might dislike visitors, would hardly be rude to her in his own house; Randal, even if he did not approve, could not be very angry; Miss Ashley would be really pleased. Flora saw very well that Mabel had taken a fancy to her.

So one lovely afternoon she walked across by the lanes from St. Denys to Pensand, and with

a beating heart, for she had many misgivings, passed in at the lodge-gate, and climbed slowly up the steep winding road. After her sunny walk she enjoyed the deep shade of the great old trees, though every rustle among the fern startled her, and in the stillness she stopped and listened sometimes, as if she was a person who had no right there.

Flora had hardly boldness enough for the part in life that she was now called upon to play. She could be cool and composed enough in what concerned Dick Northcote, or any other acquaintance or admirer she might have; but Randal was a different thing, and to walk in his grounds, to run the risk of meeting his father, was what agitated Flora to the very depths of her nature. More than once she was on the point of turning back, but then curiosity spoke and said: 'You have so long wished to see the Castle, and there cannot be a better opportunity. Don't be absurd; nobody will hurt you. If he is vexed you can soon pacify him.' And that faint shadow of uneasiness, without putting itself into any words or conscious thoughts, had its effect too. Flora walked on rather more quickly than before.

It was like the palace of the Sleeping Beauty, she began to think, as she passed under the gate-tower, and through the wild rose-garden beyond, without seeing any living creature. But then she suddenly found herself at the house-door. She looked at the long silent building with the strangest feeling of familiarity, hesitating a moment before she rang the bell. When she did ring it the dreadful clanging noise seemed as if it would never stop. It brought a deepened colour into Flora's cheeks, even with her age and experience. Perhaps the as-

tonished face of the old butler, who came to the door at once, may have had something to do with this. He knew Mrs. Lancaster very well by sight, but in his wildest dreams he had never imagined her calling at the Castle.

However, he did not deny that Miss Ashley was at home, though there was a protest in his manner, a 'What will the world come to next!' as he led the way through the hall and library to the drawing-room. There was also disapproval in his voice as he announced Mrs. Lancaster.

Mabel got up quickly from a great chair near the open window, where she was sitting in lonely state, with the kitten in her lap, and welcomed Flora with a frank pleasure that set the visitor quite at her ease.

Mabel herself felt rather alarmed, though she did not show it—remembering the General's orders, and what Randal had said—but of course poor Mrs. Lancaster knew nothing about that, and her kindness in coming was quite delightful. They sat down at each end of that large sofa which was Randal's favourite, and talked a little about the walk from St. Denys, and the beauty of Pensand.

'I must show you the garden presently, when you are rested,' said Mabel. 'Yes, I think it is the most lovely place I ever saw. I thought it very dull at one time; but now it is better, and I have my kitten. Isn't she pretty?'

Flora was quite ready to admire the kitten. She could not help glancing round the room, too, which she thought quite alarmingly handsome and stately. She felt like an intruder among all those dark old portraits, though it was with a certain pride and satisfaction that she looked at them. Yet she had enough sense

of the fitness of things to feel, with a little keen pain, that this small lame girl beside her was more fitted than she was to live in such rooms as these. She tried to put these disagreeable things out of her head, however, and began talking to Mabel in a personal sort of way about herself and her occupations, hovering near the subject that she wished and yet half feared to bring into their conversation.

Flora's gentle manner seemed to invite confidence. Mabel felt that, as she had done the other day. Having lived all this time without a woman to speak to, it was surprisingly easy to make friends with Mrs. Lancaster, and Mabel was quite ready to do it. The General's prejudices, and Randal's remarks on 'society,' were not worth thinking of. Mrs. Lancaster was a very pretty sweet-mannered woman, who had walked all the way from St. Denys to see her, when other people did not trouble themselves to remember her existence. Mabel in her loneliness was quite determined not to lose this chance of making a friend. Randal liked Mrs. Lancaster; he could not really mind; and so she chattered away.

One or two questions from Flora brought out the whole story of her young friend's life, up to the time of her coming to Pensand. After that there was not much to tell. To Mabel herself it seemed rather dreamy and strange, that long string of summer days spent in solitude, with now and then a bright exception. Flora seemed to understand it all.

'What a difference it must make to you when Mr. Hawke is here!' she said. 'Had you a very pleasant drive the other day, after we parted?'

'O yes, charming,' said Mabel. 'And we are to have still nicer

drives when he comes back. You know him very well, don't you? Do tell me what you think of him.'

Flora looked at her with a curious intensity, and smiled.

'Of course, I have known him ever since we were children. He and I and Mr. Northcote, whom I think you also know, we were all young together, and very naughty children too.'

'Mr. Northcote! yes; but Randal is much nicer,' began Mabel, and then paused in some confusion. What was she saying? Had not Randal told her that Dick Northcote might very likely marry Mrs. Lancaster after all? 'I don't mean that, exactly,' she said. 'What I mean is, I know Mr. Northcote so very slightly, and Randal so well. No doubt Mr. Northcote might be just as nice, if one knew him. But I think one might so very easily be mistaken about Randal. Don't you think so too?'

Mabel looked anxiously at her companion, to see if she minded that unfortunate remark about Dick. But Flora was smiling, and though there was something slightly peculiar in her smile, the gentleness of her manner was unchanged.

'I think I know what you mean, quite well,' she said, to Mabel's relief ignoring Dick altogether. 'His satirical way of talking about things.'

'Yes. Do you know, when he first came I did not like him at all. I thought he was so sharp and ill-natured. But now I have quite changed my mind, and I should be a very ungrateful girl if I had not. I can't tell you how kind he is. He thinks of everything to give one pleasure. He brought me a number of books from London'—here Mabel could not refrain from a small sigh—

'and he gave me this dear kitten; and now the pleasantest thing I have to think of is his coming back again.'

'He is like a kind brother to you, in fact,' said Flora.

'I don't believe brothers ever are so kind,' said Mabel impulsively.

Then she thought there was something a little strange in the fixed intense manner in which Flora was gazing at her. It struck her that perhaps she ought not to talk of Randal in this way to a mere acquaintance, and the thought brought the colour into her face suddenly.

'Perhaps he would not like me to talk like this,' she said.

'I value your confidence, Miss Ashley,' said Flora, in her low even voice. 'Don't mind speaking to me. I know very well how you must enjoy it. And in all you tell me there is nothing that is not natural.'

'It all seemed to come as a matter of course,' said Mabel. 'His father and mine were like brothers, you see. So it was quite natural, as soon as we really understood each other, that we should call each other by our Christian names.'

'Of course. Perfectly natural,' said Flora.

Then, a little to Mabel's surprise, she stood up and drew an odd quick breath, as if something was stifling her.

'Do excuse me,' she said; 'but isn't this room very hot? You said you would show me the garden. I should be so thankful for a little fresh air.'

'O yes, we will come at once,' said Mabel.

They wandered about among the roses, but Flora did not seem to care about them much. Mabel thought she could not be well, and wondered what she could do

for her. Flora, however, declared that she was perfectly well, and should enjoy her walk home.

'You must take some roses,' said Mabel, cutting a lovely red one.

'No, indeed, thank you. The garden at home is quite full of roses,' said Flora. 'Please leave these beauties where they are. I may not go straight home, and they would fade before I got there. I really mean it. I would rather not have them, thank you.'

As they drew near the house again, Mabel's ear distinguished the well-known sound of Stevens setting down the tea-tray in the drawing-room. At the same instant Flora paused; perhaps she heard it too.

'If I go down this path, it will bring me out into the drive, won't it?' she said. 'I think I had better say good-bye now.'

Mabel was beginning to remonstrate, when General Hawke suddenly stepped out of the drawing-room window. Mabel felt rather terrified, and Flora coloured deeply; her young companion wondered why. But the General was equal to the occasion. Mabel almost felt as if she loved him the next moment, when he came forward in the pleasantest, politest manner, claimed acquaintance with Mrs. Lancaster, and shook hands with her quite kindly.

'Your tea is ready, Mabel,' he said. 'Mrs. Lancaster will be glad of it after her long walk.'

But Flora would not be persuaded to go into the house again.

'Thank you, General Hawke,' she said. 'You are very kind; but I promised to be home in time for my father and mother's tea. I can't disappoint them.'

'Then you are a very good daughter,' said the General kindly; 'and I suppose we must not say

any more. How does Captain Cardew like this hot weather? He is a wonderful man, is he not? Just as strong and hearty as ever?'

'He is very well, thank you,' said Flora. 'Good-bye, Miss Ashley.'

General Hawke stood there on the gravel, and watched the two young women as they wished each other good-bye. Mabel was a little disturbed and vexed at her friend's sudden departure; he could see that; there was a sad puzzled look in her eyes. Mrs. Lancaster, too, looked grave. But he could not be aware of the change in her as Mabel was—of the unaccountable cloud that had come over her gentle serenity. Mabel walked with her as far as the drive; and as they stood there for a moment, out of the General's hearing, Flora had the greatest difficulty in not giving some quick passionate answer to the almost affectionate question that those earnest eyes were asking her. She was wise, however, and restrained herself. She walked quickly away, and Mabel went back to tea and the General.

'What brought that good woman here?' said he, without any particular sign of indignation.

'She came to see me,' said Mabel. 'I hope you won't be angry with her.' She did not know, you see, that you objected to strangers.'

'She ran away rather fast when I appeared,' said the General. 'We are not often troubled with visitors from St. Denys, fortunately. It is a very good thing, do you know, to have the character of being ferocious; it saves you from a great many bores. How do you like that lady?'

'She is very pretty, I think, and very nice,' said Mabel.

'Yes; a good-looking woman still, though nothing to what she

was ten years ago, when all the boys were wild about her.'

'Was Randal wild about her too?' said Mabel, she did not know why.

'Randal!' said the General, looking at her rather sharply. 'What can have put that into your head?'

'Nothing at all. I don't know. I only wondered.'

'No, my dear. Randal may not be perfect—no young man is. But he is a sensible fellow, with very good taste; and he was always sure to leave that sort of nonsense to rattlepates like Dick Northcote.'

It was a great relief to Mabel that Mrs. Lancaster's visit had not enraged the General. She thought perhaps, in spite of what he had said to Randal, he would not very much object to her coming again.

And Flora! Several times in her long walk home all her strength seemed suddenly to desert her, and she was obliged to

sit down on the bank by the roadside, till she had scolded herself back into some sort of life.

This was what she had gained by her journey to Pensand. What had before been nothing but a faint possibility had become an awful suspicion, deepening sometimes into almost certainty. And yet she told herself it could not be; she could not believe it. Other people might be false, but this one person *must* be true, or what was to become of her? Then she hated herself for suspecting him. Then she remembered Mabel's blush, and the happy tone in which she talked of 'Randal,' the one brightness in her dull life. Then again— But it was no use arguing with oneself about it. Time would show.

And so at last Flora reached home, pale and exhausted. She lay on the sofa all the evening, submitting to be caressed and petted by her mother, who begged her never to think of taking such a long walk again.

CLUB CAMEOS.

A Parasite.

IN the animal world there are certain insects, apparently of little use in the scheme of creation except to themselves, which derive their sustenance entirely from the objects, whether animate or inanimate, to which they cling. Refusing to be shaken off, they only take their departure when the victim of their close embraces has yielded up all that he, she, or it once possessed. Their appearance upon the scene is generally indicative of two things: the first, that the creature upon which they settle is a prey worth the sucking; and the second, that their attentions generally end in the ruin of their subject. We know the plant that stealthily creeps up the stalwart trunk of the vigorous tree, twines its deadly foliage around the bark, and soon causes what was once blossom and vitality to be transformed into tinder and decay. We know the insidious reptile which so tenaciously adheres to its quarry, that, whilst it swells and batters upon the blood, every prick of its sucker inflicts a mortal wound. We know that terrible excrescence, half animal, half vegetable, which, wherever it deposits itself, becomes so identified with the object of its selection as to be an actual necessity to the existence of the victim: remove it, and he dies; starve it, and he perishes; the two—the victimiser and the victimised—are inseparable until the hateful union is dissolved by the triumph of the parasite.

Nor is the species unknown to the social world. Varied in

its operations, of different tastes, habits, and capacity, the manoeuvres of the class are always the same in the end—profit to themselves and destruction to the creature fixed upon for suction. As in animal life, so in social life, the parasite never attaches itself to a vigorous and healthy subject. It knows that where there is sound and genuine vitality it has no place, and would be instantly expelled did it attempt to take up its abode. Its scent is keen after physical or moral decay, and where that is found it is sure of a home. The oak may appear to the uninitiated healthy and flourishing; but the parasite knows what poison is instilled in the juice of the sap, and how long it will be before the branches wither, and the trunk be the haunt of corruption. The man may seem, to most of his acquaintance, more than ordinarily free from the faults of human nature; yet the parasite knows what are his infirmities, and settles upon the weak points, provided something worth the effort may be extracted from them. The social parasite is of all descriptions; the genus is as extensive as ubiquitous; still its characteristics are invariably the same—to maintain its existence at the expense of another.

There is the literary parasite. He may be of a keenly acquisitive turn of mind, and obtain his reputation by sucking the brains of deceased authors, of obsolete authors, of unknown foreign authors, or of authors who have innocently confided their

manuscripts to his hands, and, by manipulating their thoughts and dressing their ideas in a different costume, pose before the public as a new and original writer. A great work of science appears ; it is the result of the labour of half a lifetime ; it is heavy, crude, and undigested, and appeals to the few. The literary parasite takes it up, cleverly evades infringing upon its copyright, and popularises it ; it has a large sale, and the parasite profits at the expense of the discoverer. A valuable history is published ; he epitomises it. A writer hits the public taste by ingenuity of plot or charm of style ; he copies it. It may be that the parasite has been unfortunate in his productions ; they have no market ; they are unread at the libraries ; they have been bought by weight by the buttermilk and the trunk-maker. The instincts of his species prompt him how to act. He fastens himself upon some writer who has gained for himself a great name. He criticises with spiteful malevolence every work such an author produces. He discovers errors in his dates, in his grammar, in his transcripts, in all that he says and thinks. When the great author issues his volumes, the cynical and malicious rush to the reviews and the magazines to hear what the parasite has to say. Abuse, so long as it be bitter and personal, never lacks readers. As the moon receives all her light from the sun, so the literary parasite borrows all his lustre from the great intellectual orbs he copies or traduces.

There is the commercial parasite. He attaches himself to some great capitalist, sings the praises of his wealth, vaunts the undertakings he has set afloat, and receives his reward by sneaking into the board-room as a director. He makes it

his business to know when a bank is shaky in its credit, or a stock-jobber has sold shares which he cannot deliver, and forthwith it is through him and his tribe that the stock of the one falls to the ground, and the stock of the other rises to a heavy premium. He twines himself round the great pillars of the City, and is always petitioning for 'tips,' and for allotments in new Companies which are sure on their day of issue to be quoted at a profit. When one of his patrons fails, or is committed for fraudulent proceedings, the parasite is always among the first to say that 'he knew all along that the firm was rotten,' or that 'the fellow was the greatest scoundrel unhung.' He worships chairmen of committees, for he is a great respecter of the powers that be. He is the toady of the wealthy merchant, but the systematic libeller of all the smaller fry. He is the Ananias of panics, and would lie till his tongue cleaved to his mouth, provided he could rig the market so as to serve his ends. He is the first to crave for time when unable to meet his own bills, and the last to extend such mercy to another.

There is the political parasite. He clings to the leaders of the party, writes them up in newspapers, and flatters them at the meetings of their associations. He gets up testimonials ; he is honorary secretary to half a dozen political institutions, but leaves the work to a clerk ; he is the terror of private secretaries, upon whom he is always calling ; he is the author of pamphlets, which he sends to every member of the Cabinet, on all the great public questions ; and he passes his fussy days in the hope that he will eventually creep into office and fifteen hundred a year. If he is appointed, the country is saved. If the Government refuse

to recognise his claims, the country is going to the mischief, and he offers his services to the other side.

There is the military parasite, haunting the Horse Guards, and cringing after good civil or military posts, to the exclusion of men who have served their country in all parts of the globe, whilst he himself has never been out of

England. There is the clerical parasite, hanging on to the dignitaries of the Church; toadying private patrons, pretending to interest himself in the labours of the great religious societies, fawning, scheming, eating dirt, and crawling in the dust, provided he only succeeds in obtaining the prize he has set before him—a good fat

living. There is the scientific parasite, turning the inventions of other men to his own account, and stealing the principle of their ideas, whilst keeping himself clear of the Patent Laws. And there is the commonest and most prosperous of the order—the parasite who makes society his victim.

Scrope Hillingdon is a prominent member of this class of creature. A younger son, he

testifies by his life and career to the partialities of the law of primogeniture. Whilst his brother, Sir Alured, is a great landowner and a county magnate of the wealthiest and most powerful description, Scrope is a nobody, and lord of some six thousand pounds, strictly tied up, which yield him four and a half per cent per annum. During his father's lifetime no distinction was made

between himself and the heir. Both went to the same school; both went to the same tutor on the Continent; both spent the same pocket-money; and both, on their return to the parental roof, led the same kind of lives. Scrope thought of entering a profession; but pleasant years passed by, and he forgot all about his intention. He lived in the same set as his elder brother; went into the same society; belonged to the same clubs; had the same tastes, and indulged in the same expenditure; when he wanted horses he drew upon the paternal stables, and when he wanted funds he was permitted to draw upon the paternal banker. One chill October morning his father dies; the elder son succeeds to the family honours; and the younger son finds himself with a pittance, on which he is to live for the rest of his days.

What course is open to him? His past habits and tastes have unfitted him for the slow laborious business of following a profession and making it pay. He has lived in society, he has been accustomed to luxuries of a certain kind which have developed into necessities, and whenever he wanted the sinews of war 'the old dad parted like a trump.' Therefore, without any previous training in self-denial or economy, he suddenly finds himself thrown upon the world a beggar. All the accomplishments he possesses are useless for the serious purposes of life; it is hard work tilling land with a silver trowel. He can ride; he can dance; he is a fair shot; he can read French; he is a very good amateur vet.; and his knowledge of navigation, for a yachtsman, is more than respectable. Yet, desirable as these accomplishments are for the idle man, they have no market value. To fight the battle of life a man

wants something more than a becoming uniform.

Scrope soon realised his position. His brother was very kind to him, was hospitality itself in the way of putting him up in the country for any length of period, allowed him to ride his horses, lent him his yacht and paid all its expenses; but he drew the line at ready money. When Scrope hinted at his wretched allowance, and how acceptable a further provision would be to him, Sir Alured never rose to the bait. On the contrary, it was the baronet who made out that his own resources were crippled—he had to pay off certain heavy mortgages; the portions of his sisters were a terrible charge upon the estate; the expenses that he had incurred for drainage and building improvements were simply enormous; the demands of his tenants were as incessant as they were exorbitant; and the rest of the usual excuses which country gentlemen make when directly applied to by any branch of their family for money. Sir Alured would do all in his power to help his brother; he would willingly use what interest he possessed with the Government to get him an appointment. How would he like an inspectorship of factories, or to be the governor of a prison? But he clearly made him to understand that the property would not bear the grant of any addition to the six thousand pounds, and that he would not consider himself liable for any debts that the younger brother might in the future incur.

For a man of Scrope's tastes to live on an income of something less than three hundred a year was practically impossible. With economy it might keep him in clothes and dinners, but it was incapable of further extension.

He thought of the matrimonial market: but heiresses, numerous and amiable enough in novels, are not so easily found in real life to bestow their wealth upon penniless younger sons. Gradually, and almost unconsciously, Scrope sank to the vocation of the parasite. He had birth, he had good looks, and, above all, thanks to his name and his sisters'

marriages, he was in society. Around him he saw many men who had what he had not, and who coveted to possess what he, until he was made to learn its value, held somewhat cheap. With these people he entered into a treaty of reciprocity; he gave what they desired, he received what he was in need of.

The acquaintance of Scrope is

strictly limited to those who are calculated to be of service to him. As sure as he attaches himself to any man or family, so sure is it that the victim is worth the bleeding. A young peer has just succeeded to his property; Scrope makes his acquaintance, takes stock of his intellectual attainments, and if he finds him a likely subject to be operated upon, proceeds at once to leech him. En-

dowed with most of those agreeable qualities which captivate the young, Scrope soon weaves his cobwebs to catch his fly. He flatters the lad about the two points that youth is the most easily gulled—the fair sex and horse-flesh. My lord soon fancies himself a perfect lady-killer, and is introduced by Scrope into doubtful society; and, as a consummate judge of that noble ani-

mal the horse, buys from his friend at high prices the refuse of the market. The parasite is generally a good card-player, and Scrope is no exception to the rule. He teaches the young aristocrat how to play whist and *écarté*, and the subtle beauties that are to be found in baccarat, napoleon, and poker. Such lessons are not given, as we are aware, for nothing; and perhaps most of us have had to pay pretty heavily for our knowledge in these matters. I should like to know the extent of the cheques to which many a young peer has scrawled his name and handed over to Scrope as fees for tuition.

The next move of the parasite is to look after the estates of his victim; and, if he finds the steward is capable of being corrupted, the two stand in together, and derive no inconsiderable profit from what they are pleased to term the management of the property. During this happy period of suction Scrope has seldom occasion to touch the interest upon his six thousand pounds. His lordship provides him with all that ministers to the wants of man, and as long as such a state of things continues Scrope is perfectly content and supremely loyal. The intimacy, however, seldom lasts for any great length of time. Many causes operate against its duration. The victim gradually finds out, perhaps, that he is being pigeoned, and a rupture takes place; or he marries, and his wife disapproves of the acquaintance of Mr. Hillingdon; or his friends interfere; or he ends by being ruined, when it is the parasite and not the peer who brusquely dissolves partnership.

Scrope, however, has many irons in the fire, and if one falls out it is soon replaced. To the man of trade whose wife is am-

bitious of social honours the parasite is a most invaluable friend. He tones down the gaudiness of the furniture, and alters the suburban look of the appointments of the establishment. He gives little hints as to behaviour and deportment, which are gratefully received. He examines the lady's visiting-list, and freely erases from it. When his lessons have been mastered sufficiently so that the woman can dress herself without courting ridicule, and the man can behave at dinner without attracting attention, Scrope calls upon his sisters and desires them 'to be civil to these people.' And those fair dames, knowing that it is to their brother's interest to comply with his request, carry out his instructions to the letter. More than one eminent City lady has entered society through the interest of the female branches of the Hillingdon family in her behalf, and more than one eminent City man has had to pay substantial footing-money to Scrope for the favours thus accorded.

Scrope is the middle-man between the outside world and the inside world, and, provided you pay his fees, he will do the best he can for you. As there are men in London who will provide you with cooked dinners, with active waiters, with bands, brass or string, with plate and china, and temporary decorations of all kinds, so Scrope will supply you with guests for your garden-parties, celebrities for your dinners, and saltatory youth for your dances. It is like everything else nowadays, only a question of arrangement—and ready money. If it may be said without offence, I should certainly decline to appoint Scrope Hillingdon as one of my executors; I should not recommend him as a trustee; there are times when his word might

be open to suspicion ; it might be perhaps carrying confidence too far to lend him money ; but if I wanted a garden-party to be a success, or the dresses at a fancy-ball to be noted for their artistic or picturesque character, or a complicated cotillon to be got up, or pleasant people to be collected together and to be amused, or anything of a similar nature, I should without hesitation be only too glad to employ the services of Scrope. He is a kind of master of the ceremonies let out for hire.

Nor is he in this matter different from the rest of the class. One of the oddest features which society nowadays presents is the calm business-like manner in which certain of its members, without apparent loss of caste, receive money for the display of any accomplishments they may possess. You go to one house, and listen to a young man pleasantly warbling at the piano to a hushed crowd, and your hostess tells you in a whisper that he is very much in request, and that she pays him ten guineas for his three songs. The next evening you are at dinner, and there opposite you is the young man, whom in the simplicity of your heart you regarded as an ordinary professional vocalist, and you find that he is an officer retired from the service, and the nephew of a bishop. At a third house you meet a mediæval designer ; at a fourth, a comic entertainer ; at a fifth, a reader ; at a sixth, an amateur actor, and so on,—all young men of the most irreproachable connections, all ‘in society,’ and all who receive payment in solid cash for their services. It is difficult in these days to know where the amateur ends and the professional begins. In former times the line of demarcation was very fairly drawn ; he who received payment for his

work could no longer dub himself amateur. But now it is notorious that men, who would be much angered if they were considered as professionals, sing at drawing-rooms for money, act at private theatricals for money, give comic or dramatic readings for money, ride indirectly for money, play cricket-matches for money, superintend the decoration of your houses in the most approved style of Gothic art for money ; and soon, I suppose, country gentlemen, who wish to outrival each other in the slaughter they can effect, will have to pay crack shots to walk their moors and enter their preserves ; or hostesses, in despair at the absence of good dancers, will have to pay young men to waltz. Forty years ago such a non-descript state of things would not have been permitted to exist. If a man chose to be a ‘professional,’ he had to work at his career as a professional ; if he became celebrated, society was glad to know him ; if he failed to attain distinction, he was lost to his former set. But it would never have been allowed for a man to expect the social advantages of an amateur whilst in the enjoyment of the pecuniary rewards of the professional. We in this generation are more liberal ; we permit our young men to serve society and worship Mammon.

Such being the case, Scrope Hillingdon has carved out for himself a very lucrative career as an amateur Master of the Ceremonies. To the great and the wealthy, whom he knows, he takes an amazing amount of trouble off their hands. He organises their picnics, superintends all the arrangements at their garden-parties, prompts the nervous and the hesitating at private theatricals, gives instructions as to the dresses to be worn at fancy-balls, makes

neat little speeches when circumstances require them; and, in short, is a kind of general-utility man on the stage of society. Of course he is paid. If the truth were known, that paternal legacy of six thousand pounds must have swelled itself into quite a splendid array of figures by this time. I cannot say that the course he pursues is either pleasant or highly honourable, but it is eminently prosperous. Young men have entered life under his auspices: some have shunned the rocks ahead, and got safe into port; others have struck and have foundered: but Scrope Hillingdon, the wrecker, has managed, ere the bark went down, to secure for himself a goodly portion of the cargo. Wealthy men have been ushered into society through the *portières* of his sisters' drawing-rooms; their ambitious wives have entered upon a reckless career of luxury and display; ruin has overtaken them; yet Scrope Hillingdon has made full profit out of the transaction before the servants were dismissed, and the petition in bankruptcy filed.

As in the days of fable story there were few who crossed the path of the ogre but had to pay for their temerity, so there are few who have fallen in the way of Scrope and have escaped unhurt. He may not have taken their lives, but at least they issue from his den torn and maimed. Why was poor young Fluffe, Lord Downy's eldest son, the gayest Lancer that ever fluttered pennon, hurriedly obliged to send in his papers? Had Scrope nothing to do with introducing the lad to the money-lenders, and with the history of that card scandal which was the talk of every anteroom in the kingdom? What made poor old Molasses, that eminent sugar-baker, suspend payment and

appear in the *Gazette*? Was it not the extravagance of his wife, prompted and encouraged by Scrope? and pray how much of that misspent wealth found its way into Scrope's pocket? Why did young Fitz-Storke have to mortgage the Heron property to the hilt? Who was the cause of Monty Lascelles having to resign his excellent appointment, and betake himself to cattle-farming at Monte Video? Who created the difference between young Palmer and his father? and who was the real cause of that ill-balanced youth's imitation of the signature of his parent? Where are Arthur Domville, Jack Graham, Reggie Turner, the 'General,' Jumping Hinton, and the rest of that gay crew? Broke, helplessly broke! And their ruin, either directly or indirectly, lies at the door of Scrope Hillingdon.

Naturally there are numerous stories against this plausible gentleman, yet none have been proved in such a satisfactory manner as to justify either society or the committee of his clubs to take cognisance of his proceedings. On the contrary, on the few occasions when it has been necessary to make some quiet and unofficial inquiry into certain matters with which Scrope was connected, he has come triumphantly out of the investigation, and those who have set it on foot have been made to smart for their suspicions. Still most of us know it bodes little good to the aristocrat or plutocrat who is seen much in his society. How we pity the young men he collects around his luxurious dining-table at the club, who laugh at his stories in the smoking-room, who sit in his box at the theatre, and who are so proud to be seen with a man who knows everybody, and one of whose sisters is a countess of the highest fashion! Rest assured

that a time will come when his victims will find neither his dinners appetising nor his stories amusing, but, when that grave parliament with the family lawyer is held, will curse the day they ever allowed themselves to be dazzled by the brilliancy of the gifts of Scrope Hillingdon.

Of late years this skilful spider has chiefly been content with

spinning his web in commercial circles. He is just the man the plutocrat admires. He is a gentleman by birth, and looks the character; his manners are perfect, he knows everybody who is worth knowing, and he is entirely free from pride. Given a man of undoubted wealth, and there are few who can surpass Scrope in all the arts of fascination;

to the ordinary mortal he is, however, as a rule, cold and repellent. The plutocrat likes to have Scrope at his house and to trot him out to the different guests. 'Know that fellow? O, he's a capital chap! He is a brother of Sir Alured Hillingdon' (occasionally Sir Halured Illingdon), 'and his sister, don't you know, is the wife of that old swell, the Earl of Mountsorrel. O, he's a great

friend of mine; always here.' And as long as the plutocrat has a large balance at his banker's, a good house over his head, a good cook in his kitchen, curious vintages in his cellar, a well-kept country house, a moor to shoot over, or perhaps a deer-forest, or perhaps a steam-yacht, Scrope has not the slightest objection to be his 'great friend.' Indeed, he prefers the plutocracy to the aristo-

crazy. 'They think more of one, and they give better dinners,' he says. After a few weeks' acquaintance with Mr. Bullion, the old game begins. 'I suppose you know that Lady Mountsorrel is my sister?' asks Scrope of his host, as they sit together after dinner. 'O, of course; who does not?' is the reply. 'Why, she is one of the most fashionable women in

London.' 'I was thinking,' says Scrope carelessly, 'of asking her to call upon Mrs. Bullion. Your wife would have no objection, I suppose?' 'Objection, my dear feller! Why, it's what Mrs. Bullion has been badgering me about for the last—I mean my wife would take it as a great honour, Mr. Hillingdon, and I should be very much obliged to you. You

know Mrs. Bullion is a bit 'igh in her notions.' Then the conversation takes the form of business. At the end of a few days the barouche of Lady Mountsorrel appears at the door of Mr. Bullion's mansion; cards are handed out; Mrs. Bullion, seated in the gaudiest of chariots with the brassiest of harness, returns the visit; and a fortnight afterwards the couple are asked to dinner. Scrope is in-

vited to meet them; he takes down Mrs. Bullion, and freely introduces her at the reception which his sister afterwards holds. He borrows (that is the polite way of putting it) a loan from Mr. Bullion shortly after this arrangement has been entered into.

The system of 'promotion by purchase' has been transferred from the ranks of the army to the ranks of society.

THE ARTIST'S REVERIE.

IN the dull dim dusk of the twilight hour
I think of years that are dead and gone—
Of the broken husks, of the barren flow'r,
Of the deeds undone, and the dreams outworn.
Ah me ! that Time is so weary with pain,
And Life is so brief, and dreams so vain ;
And the sunshine's smile and the tear-drop's show'r
Are ever together in twin-birth born.

A pictured face from my easel looks,
As once a face to my own looked back,
With soft eyes brown as the water-brooks,
And the love that the face of my dream must lack.
O half of my heart, O sister-soul,
What a lifelong sea must between us roll—
That I can look, and you cannot see
The tears that blind or the pains that rack !

To-day, or to-morrow, or yesterday—
What does it matter ? I had them all ;
I saw the smile, like a young thought gay,
That the years have made as bitter as gall.
I trod the grapes and the wine was mine,
But others snatched it, both fruit and vine ;
Ah, rough are the roads of Fortune's way,
And some must run and others must fall !

If I dreamt of love as a man may dream,
And woke to a knowledge that love was vain ;
If once you seemed as you do not seem
Now, when the sad years part us twain ;
If you for a single hour were mine,
And I was yours for as brief a time,—
Who shall say what has come between,
Or value art at the worth of gain ?

My heart has blossomed, my life has borne,
The hand of Time on my own is laid ;
A wrinkled face with a brow pain-worn
Is the face to which world-court is paid.
And the little I've done, how poor it seems,
And how far removed from my once proud dreams !
For a desolate age and a heart time-worn
Seem saddest of all sad things God made.

O years that have drifted, and drift for ever
On to the future, back to the past !
O gladsome gifts that are sweet to the giver,
And only sad that they fly so fast !
Both years and gifts in the great Forever,
There perchance you may flit and hover,
And I your good may at last discover
If the soul can a life's long pain outlast !

RITA.

NEWMARKET.

NEWMARKET is termed, and justly so, the metropolis of racing, but a greater contrast than Newmarket presents during the race-weeks and the rest of the year can scarcely be imagined. Any one who stood on the top of the hill on the Cambridge road, and looked down the main street, in one of the off-weeks, would think that he had hardly ever seen such a desolate forsaken-looking sort of place ; the only living things to be seen being a few old women standing at the corners of the streets scratching their elbows, and two or three lads lounging about. Occasionally a tradesman will come out of his shop, and, after looking disconsolately up and down the street, will go and look into his own shop-window ; his idea being, I suppose, either to see if he can dress his window more attractively, or that he would rather stare into his own shop-window than that nobody at all should ; and the only way you would discover you were in a great racing district would be that you might see a string of sheeted racers passing through the street on the way from their training-grounds to their stables ; or if you listened to the old women's or lads' conversation you would hear nothing but about 'Mat Dawson's lot,' or Brown's, or Porter's, or some of the other numerous trainers' 'lots.' The number of empty houses, too, and the bills of auction sales you see posted up everywhere with 'In re' So-and-so in the corner, or 'By order of the Sheriff,' add to the desolateness of the scene. But during the race-

weeks all this is altered, and the scene is as exciting and enlivening as it was dull before ; the pavements crowded with men, and two huge masses on each side, at the Rooms and White Hart, reminding one strongly of the way bees hang out of their hives previous to swarming. The inhabitants, too, erect stalls down both sides of the street, where all sorts of things are exposed for sale—fruit and vegetables of every kind, and amongst these hampers of a curious vegetable believed by the aborigines to be cucumbers, but to an uninstructed eye looking like a cross between a pumpkin and a hedgehog, so yellow and prickly are they ; large baskets of mushrooms, those esculents which once cost the late Lord George Bentinck so dearly, and which he ever after cursed so heartily. There are stalls also where clothes and boots are sold, besides others where very dubious-looking confectionery is dealt in, and one I saw which had plates of yellow snail-looking things for sale. I do not know whether racegoers are supposed to eat these things, but if they do they must have uncommonly strong stomachs.

Vehicles of every sort and shape are plying for hire in the street, all of that wonderful kind that seem peculiar to race-meetings, regattas, Wimbledon Meetings, &c., and which fill a person with wonder to think where they could have been made, and what they were originally intended for. Newmarket is, indeed, worth seeing on the morning of one of the big days,

like the Cambridgeshire, to form any idea of the enormous multitude of people attending. It is well worth while to get into the stand at the end of the Rowley Mile as soon as you can, and a most wonderful sight it is to see the huge and incessant mass of people pouring down the side of the course from the old stand; one unbroken stream, many yards wide, and apparently never ending, yet perfectly quiet and orderly; no rough horseplay or rowdyism; composed of men who come for racing, and nothing else. An almost equally large string of vehicles pours down the road, the full ones getting along as fast as they can manage, and those that have discharged their loads galloping back in hopes of fresh fares. The natural idea of any one attending for the first time is that there will be an awful crush; but such is the excellency of Newmarket as a racecourse that there is none whatever, and every one, either on foot or in the stand, can see every race from start to finish, with the exception of those run on the Cesarewitch course, and then no one can see the horses until they come into the straight, with the exception of a bare sight of the start, and a glimpse of them as they pass the Gap, which may be caught by keen-eyed people in the stand. It is really extraordinary to see how the immense crowd that you behold coming seems to dissipate, so that there does not appear to be any very great multitude of people until the races are over, and you turn home; then you see how enormous the numbers have been, there being a complete block of people from the course right through the town, and even up to the station.

The stand is, as usual, divided into three portions—one for members of the Jockey Club, the second Tattersall's, and the third

for the general public; the two last named are generally full, as all the principal bookmakers assemble here. There is comparative quiet until the numbers for the first race are put up—the only noise to be remarked is the voice of some bookmaker offering to bet on some big race to come; but suddenly a peculiar creaking is heard, and a frame rises above the building next to the trainers' stand, with the numbers of the horses starting, and the names of jockeys. There is then a dead silence for a minute or so, whilst people are marking their cards, and next a perfect storm of '4 to 1, bar 1!' rises from the ring, deafening and utterly bewildering the novice. This storm lasts, if it is not a heavy betting race, not only until the horses are at the post, but even after they are running, and some insane individuals actually offer to bet as to what horse has won after they have passed the post. But if there has been heavy betting a dead silence is maintained in the ring from the time the horses get to the starter until they have passed the post; this was most remarkably illustrated on the last Cambridgeshire day. From the time the horses got to the starting-post until the race was finished, though there was a delay of three-quarters of an hour, owing to some of the horses repeatedly breaking away, not a sound was heard in the ring; the silence was almost oppressive. Sometimes when a complete outsider wins, whose name has never been written down by the bookmakers, the more excitable of them throw up their hats and cheer loudly; but as a body they are a most impassive set of men, and you could never tell by their faces whether they had lost or won. Very curious are they in another way: they never seem to,

and I suppose really do not, care a bit about the horses themselves ; many of them not even looking at them when they are running, merely glancing at the winning numbers when put up. They do not appear to be guided in their bets by any regard to the condition of the horses, state or length of the course, or their previous performances, but on what they imagine to be the intentions of the stable to which they belong ; and sometimes they seem to suppose that certain horses take it in turns to win, and back them accordingly, quite independently of the condition of the horse itself. A remarkable instance of this occurred at the last Houghton Meeting, in the All-aged Stakes : only two horses were left in for them, Ecossais and Trappist, the former with three pounds the best of the weights. It is true they had run in and out in a very curious way, and this time the bookmakers declared 'it was Trappist's turn,' and backed him accordingly, giving odds against the other. When they passed the stand on their way to the starting-post, Trappist was going along with his head in the air, fighting his bit, and with the stiltiest stiffest action possible ; Ecossais cantering by his side as pleasantly as a lady's hack. But in spite of this, though it must have been evident to any one that Trappist did not intend to try, and was thoroughly sulky, yet the bookmakers gave him all their support because 'it was his day.' As was to be expected, Ecossais came right away from him, winning easily ; and great was their wrath.

The principal bookmakers have their regular stations in the ring, where they can be readily found by their customers ; and as they stand there with a pleasant smile on their faces, the old nursery rhyme, 'Ducky, ducky, ducky,

come and be killed,' always comes forcibly into my mind. A very clever-looking set of men they are, and some of them have really intellectual faces. Most wonderful calculators they are too ; the power they have to tell at a glance how much they have got in their books, and the way in which they can subdivide the odds at a moment's notice, is most extraordinary. A marked contrast to these great bookmakers are the small would-be bookmakers, who rush all about the ring, bothering any one they see who has been betting or they think likely to bet, offering the most absurd odds as an inducement. The first day of any race-meeting these gentry abound ; but by the end of the week most of them have disappeared, having retired, I suspect, into the outer ring, and here rascality does flourish. Strangely enough, in passing through it, you seem to be familiar with most of the betting men's faces, but you cannot at first remember where you have seen them previously ; when suddenly it flashes across you that you saw most of these faces, or their own brothers', in the dock at the last criminal assizes ; or if you have been over Portland or Dartmoor prisons, or any of those sort of places, that you have seen them there. How so many of them exist seems hard to discover ; but I suspect whenever they have drawn their victims sufficiently, as they consider, they bolt before the race comes off. Another kind of swindling has arisen lately. You are perhaps standing somewhere in the ring, when you discover a person is talking to you, and saying that 'Of course you have been backing our stable.' You look at him with some surprise, as he is a complete stranger to you ; whereupon the man, who is usually

tolerably well dressed, and tries to look like a gentleman, apologises for his mistake, 'thought you were So-and-so.' But, however, he keeps on talking, and you cannot shake him off. At length he declares he knows a *certainly* for the next race, which you must back, and bothers you so that, to get rid of him for the time, you give him some money to invest, which he does; and the tip turning out correct, as it very often does, you get your money—for the man has no intention of bolting, it would not answer his purpose. But you shortly find out what has occurred, and how you have been done. After the race you compare notes with your friends, feeling rather proud of winning. They ask the price you got, and you say, 'O, 4 to 1.' '4 to 1?' say they; 'why, his price was 7 to 1.' And then the murder comes out; the scamp got 7 to 1 safe enough, so that he comfortably pocketed the three extra points, and in this way, until detected, doubtless makes a very nice thing of it. But he does not often succeed in drawing the same man twice; and if you take his 'tip,' and then insist on getting the odds yourself, his blank face of disgust is very amusing; but he takes care not to let you do this twice.

At the Spring and Houghton Meetings great amusement is derived from the strong 'varsity' contingent; these youths appearing in great force, got up in the correctest of sporting costumes; some even going so far as breeches and boots, though they do not as a rule trust themselves astride a horse at the races, and certainly they get all the excitement they can require in the short drive from the turnpike, just off the Cambridge road, down to the stand. Up to this point, as the road has

been wide and the vehicles not numerous, their erratic mode of driving has not been of much importance; but here, when they get into the stream of cabs, &c., going down to the stand, nothing but a 'varsity hack in a 'varsity dog-cart could save them from total and irremediable grief. But it is a sight to see the knowing old hack seize the bit between his teeth, and getting his head well down, so as to neutralise any well-meaning but ill-directed attempt at guidance, tear down full speed, close in rear of some galloping cab, and land his passengers, in spite of their exertions, all safe, but rather scared, at the stand. Then the reckless way these youths bet! To hear them talk, you would think they were more up in racing matters than the oldest member of the Jockey Club, instead of being utterly ignorant of the respective horses, owners, jockeys, or performances; their actual knowledge never extending to more than the horses' names, and very often not so far as that even. The amount of 'tips' they have is something wonderful, supplied by their 'gyps,' I should imagine; and the best thing one can hope for is, that these gentry may be paid by a percentage on their masters' winnings, for in this case I think the perennial fountain of tips would soon dry up.

It is very curious to look down from the stand on to the outer ring just previously to the starting of the race. You see nothing but a dense mass of closely-packed hats, and little puffs of smoke rising all over the mass, making it look just as if it was smouldering, and might be expected to break out into flames at any moment. One thing that makes Newmarket so enjoyable is that there is no need of dressing to

within an inch of your life, as you have to do at Ascot and Goodwood. You see men in comfortable morning- and shooting-coats, Norfolk shirts, or any other kind of loose and easy attire; any one almost who appeared in a frock-coat and topper would be looked on with the greatest suspicion. However, there are exceptions to this rule. Many ladies do not appear here—about a dozen or so in the Jockey Club stand, and a very few in carriages, are all who attend; but those who are present seem to enjoy the racing thoroughly, as they too are dressed reasonably, and are not in continual misery through fear of a shower, or that the splendour of their costume may be eclipsed by the superior elegance of a rival, as is too often the case on other racecourses. It is, indeed, a curious thing to notice how very few ladies or women at all attend; even the wives and daughters of the neighbouring farmers do not attend, though there are a very sporting lot of them in the district. In the morning, before racing commences, you do not see any women at all about in the streets, with the exception of the few who keep the fruit and vegetable stalls in the main street.

I have mentioned previously the wonderful edibles offered for sale in the town; but those brought on to the Heath are stranger still, the chief of them consisting of acid-drops and butter-scotch. You meet vendors of these everywhere; and, stranger still, actually see grown men buying them. Whether they think they will bring them 'luck'—and there is scarcely anything a regular 'turfman' would not do if he thought it would bring him luck—or whether they imagine the taste of juvenile luxuries will restore the innocence of their youth, I do not know; but

that they buy them and actually eat them is an undoubted fact. Apples, too, are sold; and once I saw a man selling prawns in the stand itself. Now fresh prawns for breakfast are very nice, and so is prawn-curry; but wind- and sun-dried prawns offered for consumption by themselves in the middle of the day are not very inviting, and I did not see any one buy them. At the railway-station also, when you are returning, you find a lot of women hawking ducks and chickens about, but I never saw anybody buy them. Indeed, it would be rather puzzling to know what to do with one if you did purchase it. You could not open your trunk and put it in; and if you did, I do not think it would travel well with your shirts, &c.; and to sit with a dead duck in your lap the whole way back to town would be trying.

Most interesting it is to go in the early morning to the training-grounds, and look at the racers at exercise. Here you see them in every stage, from the yearling just being led about quietly with a lunging rein on to the adult racer taking his final spin, previously to competing for some stake, and a finer spectacle than this last cannot be seen: the magnificent animal in perfect condition, his satin coat, showing the play of the muscles underneath, striding along at his top speed, untouched by whip or spur, is a perfect picture of beauty. You see many people out watching the horses, some merely through fondness for horse-flesh, but many of the genus 'tout.' How people can be found weak enough to believe in their 'tips,' it is hard to conceive; for if a 'trial' is properly managed, and the stable secrets well kept, not even the lads themselves

know the weights the horses are run at, or even the exact distance, so the 'tips' of these gentry must be the veriest guesses possible. They adopt wonderful disguises, under the fallacious idea that they shall not be detected. There is one constantly to be seen got up as a clergyman of the Church; and really, if you judged him by a passing glance, you would think he was some indefatigable pastor going to visit some sick member of his flock; but if you looked closely at him, you would see that if he had a flock it would be uncommonly closely shorn. He might more correctly be termed 'a Baptist,' so often has he received the rite by total immersion in a horse-pond, stable-lads being the officiating ministers, and the frogs at the bottom his sponsors.

But there is 'a thorn in every rose,' and there is a very large one at Newmarket in the shape of a church, with a squat square tower containing a peal of the most abominable bells in England, I should think; they are all about a semitone out of tune, and the effect is aggravating past descrip-

tion—far worse than the ding-dong-spat of the three bells you so often hear in old-fashioned village churches, where two of the bells have no relation in tone to one another, and the third is cracked. These wretched things jangle and clash for, I should think, half an hour every day about eleven; and I find the idea among the aborigines is that they are playing a tune, but the effect of the performance on a musical ear is excruciating. But, apart from this, few pleasanter places can be found at which to pass some days than Newmarket during a fine autumn meeting.

One word in conclusion. If any one intends to bet at Newmarket, never take a Newmarket 'tip' unless it is very strongly corroborated elsewhere; for the true Newmarket man firmly believes, in spite of all facts to the contrary, that no horse can win unless it has been trained there, and would rather back the veriest rip in existence hailing from head-quarters than the best possible racer trained elsewhere.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE SEASON.

THE book season has been very remarkable for the number and variety of biographical works. We hardly remember for many years past such an influx of biographies. Perhaps it is somewhat under the mark if we put down the number of such works as being at least fifty. From this mass of recent literature we select for brief discussion a few which seem distinctly to predominate over their fellows in importance and interest.

The biography which is in every way the most careful and elaborate of the present season, and which has the highest positive value, is undoubtedly Professor Seeley's life of the German statesman Stein.* Professor Seeley is the author of *Ecce Homo*, a work which elicited a volume of essays from Mr. Gladstone, who gave its author the Chair of History at Cambridge, in succession to Charles Kingsley. He has now vindicated the selection by issuing a huge work, which is in form a biography, but in reality a history. We must, however, warn our readers that it is anything but amusing. It is a work which was very much wanted, and which will be of matchless value to every student and politician. For to understand the German Empire of to-day we must understand that historical Prussia of the Napoleonic age, of which Stein was a central figure. The personal

character of Stein is a very interesting one; but it is not presented with that amount of literary art of which it is fairly susceptible. He was a thoroughly honest man. Such a judge as W. A. Humboldt felt an infinite regard and love for him, and speaks of his conversation as full of force and fire. We especially like him in his autobiography and in his letters to his wife. Mr. Seeley brings out graphically that order of German imperial knighthood to which Stein belonged, which made him a virtual sovereign over his own narrow domain. He was a petty sovereign, only owning the suzerainty of the emperor; and, indeed, he was legally eligible for that throne. There are many incidental points of great interest, such as the relations of Germany and England, and the relations of Hanover towards both. His 'Emancipating Edict' was the great means of regenerating Germany. In the language of his monumental epitaph, 'he stood erect when Germany bowed the knee.' He was one of the greatest factors in the overthrow of Napoleon. We think that Professor Seeley has made an artistic mistake in excluding the brilliant narrative of the invasion of Rome by the allies. Stein administered the French territory in his day as Bismarck did in 1871. He was strongly in favour of Alsace and Lorraine being taken from France and erected into a separate principality. The work illustrates the continuity of history, and enables us to understand

* *Life and Times of Stein*. By J. R. Seeley, M.A. (Cambridge: at the University Press.)

the correlation of historical epochs. The War of Liberation must be combined with any just view of the last war. Compared with such a writer as Macaulay, Professor Seeley is dull; but compared with the German writers who have written about Stein, he is Macaulay himself. Just as the French like to get their ideas of Comte, not from Comte himself, but from a translation of Harriet Martineau's version of his writings, so we expect that Professor Seeley's work will be translated into German, and supersede Perthes and other writers.

From a biography of Stein to a biography of Bismarck is a most natural transition. Certainly there are abundant materials in existence for a biography of the German Chancellor. It has been part of the man's method and character to let his whole nature be known with candour, or at least the appearance of candour. In addition to the various 'Lives' in existence, and his letters to his wife and sisters, we have now an account of his sayings and doings in the Franco-German war.* Dr. Busch's work has received an extraordinary amount of popularity on the Continent, and we are glad to welcome an excellent English translation. Dr. Busch considers his hero a second Luther. He rather reminds us of him in his *Table-Talk*, but a more complete parallel will be found in Oliver Cromwell. We have a wonderful series of Bismarck's personal escapes. He seems to have borne a charmed life. He had some of the very narrowest escapes. His vitality is astonishing. He talks without the slightest reserve of everybody and everything. Among innumerable

presents he receives a cask of Vienna beer and a trout-pie, which sets him talking of his own streams at Varzin; he tells how he had caught a five-pound trout in a pond only supplied by a few little streams. He is essentially a country gentleman. His daughter says that his real passion in life is for turnips. Nevertheless the blood and iron are everywhere prevalent. He never scruples to express ferocious thoughts in ferocious language. At Paris he is in favour of bombardment; he is in favour of a storm. He thinks that the people brought down with their balloons should be shot as spies. Some of his graphic portraiture is admirably done. Here is his portrait of Thiers: 'He is an able and likeable man, witty and ingenious, but with hardly a trace of diplomatic quality—too sentimental for business. Beyond question he is a superior kind of man to Favre; but he is not fit to make a bargain about an armistice—barely fit, indeed, to buy or sell a horse. He is too easily put out of countenance; he betrays his feelings; he lets himself be cut. I got all sorts of things out of him; for instance, that they have only three or four weeks' provisions not used.' Later he says of Thiers: 'He has a fine intellect, good manners, and can tell a story very agreeably. I am often sorry for him, too, for he is in a bad position.' He gives a description of the Empress Eugénie: 'Very beautiful, not over middle height; with much natural intelligence has little acquired learning, and few interests in intellectual matters.' It seems that she had once taken him, with other gentlemen, through her rooms, and even into her sleeping apartment; but he had nowhere seen a book or even a newspaper. He has something

* *Bismarck in the Franco-German War, 1870-71.* Translated from the German of Dr. Moritz Busch. (Macmillan.)

to say about our Prince of Wales, and speaks, we are sorry to add, in no very friendly way of England: 'B. told me a number of amusing stories of the English court, especially of the Prince of Wales—a pleasant personage, which is a hopeful fact for the future, and may he be found to agree with his disagreeable countrymen.' There is a very amusing account of Bismarck's stay at Ferrières, Baron Rothschild's seat. The old house-steward swore that there was not a drop of wine in the place. But it turned out that there were 17,000 bottles in the house. Dr. Busch does not see why the Rothschilds should have been let off the requisition, but they are privileged. We know that they send any amount of luggage across the frontiers, and it is never searched. Bismarck's criticism on Rothschild's château was: 'Everything dear, but little that is beautiful, and still less comfortable.'

There is a curious blending of the ludicrous and the serious in this work, which, indeed, is a reproduction of Bismarck's character. The Prince is a great eater. He gives a recipe for cooking oysters, but makes a radical mistake in supposing that oysters ought to be cooked at all. He does not seem to have been a good sportsman. He only killed one pheasant, though he wounded several, and Moltke does not appear to have done much better. Moltke, it seems, invented a new drink, a sort of punch made with champagne, hot tea, and sherry, which most people will think spoils three good things. Then we suddenly pass to the most serious matters. Coming to these serious things, we see Bismarck at his best. 'If I were no longer a Christian, I would not remain an hour at my post. If I could not

count upon my God, assuredly I should not do so on earthly masters. . . . Why should I disturb myself and work unceasingly in this world, exposing myself to all sorts of vexations, if I had not the feeling that I must do my duty for God's sake? If I did not believe in a divine order, which has destined this German nation for something good and great, I would at once give up the business of a diplomatist, or I would not have undertaken it. Take from me this faith, and you take from me my fatherland. If I were not a good believing Christian, if I had not the supernatural basis of religion, you would not have had such a Chancellor.' One of the books about him makes him complain that God is 'very capricious.' Like other able men, he laments that he is not allowed to have his own autocratic ways. He puts down his glass of beer with a sigh, and says, 'I wished once more to-day, as I have often wished before, I could say for even five minutes, this is to be or is not to be. One has to bother about whys and wherefores to convince people, to entreat them even, about the simplest matters. What a worry is this eternal talking and begging for things!' He does not wish that any son of his should ever grow rich upon the Stock Exchange. He only tried his luck once, and then he lost. He says that since he went into public life he has always been in difficulties. Certainly he is one of the most extraordinary men that ever lived. People used to consider him a fool, but his foolery was the most subtle and extraordinary statesmanship the modern world has known. He has indorsed and consummated the policy of Stein.

To these two German biographies we add a third of a Ger-

man character. For a biography at once so interesting and instructive as that of the Baroness Bunsen,* by Mr. J. C. Hare, we must go back to his former work, the *Memorials of a Quiet Life*. In each case Mr. Hare would be the first to acknowledge that it is not so much his own literary workmanship, as the immense interest of the subject and heroine, that has achieved such a just popularity. His has been a singularly good fortune to be brought into close companionship with such noble women, and thus to have had such splendid opportunities. The Baroness Bunsen's life of the Baron is well known to our readers, and was fully reviewed in the 'Piccadilly Papers' on its first appearance. It will be found that the interesting vein of anecdote, dealing with sovereigns and statesmen, was not exhausted in the first great work. Mr. Hare very rightly goes fully into the ramifications of the family history, which brings many high-souled men and women before us. The match with Bunsen was a love-match. He was but a poor man, and straitness of means seems to have been a burden under which the Bunsens struggled more or less through the larger part of their lives. The great Niebuhr strongly advised the match. He would give any daughter of his own to a man like Bunsen; there was in his character and position a greater guarantee of happiness than could be found in mere rank or wealth. The young girl had left her home in South Wales for a season on the Continent, and she never saw it again for three-and-twenty years. The young scholar she married became an ambassador at the Court of London,

a peer of Prussia, a close personal friend of his sovereign's. Such a pair seemed to touch the summits of human life. Whatever places were fairest and pleasantest on this earth they saw; whatever people were best worth knowing they knew; whatever interests were highest they had their full share in them. There is much of the deepest interest in the crowded list of illustrious names; much also in the development of gracious natures, and the progress in wisdom and goodness. The Baroness beautifully says: 'The removal of all embarrassment in circumstances is one of those things for which I dare not ask in prayer. I can ask, and do, that I and mine may be provided for in the future, as we have been in the past, with all that is needful; relief *will come when it is good for me.*' Among the crowd of letters there are none that please us better than those which she writes to 'my own mother;' and those again which, as a wise and tender mother, she writes to her own children. The finest of these letters touch the noblest and most elevating subjects, which no amount of fashion, business, or amusement ever long banished from the inmost thoughts of the Bunsens. We have marked many passages of great tenderness and wisdom which might well be commended to the notice of all young ladies. Many are the wise hints which the Baroness gives to her daughter; and indeed all readers may profit by the wisdom, tenderness, and culture which pervade these fascinating volumes.

We now take up two scientific biographies. The subject in each case is a distinguished Scotsman.

With the steadiness of a man who is making triumphant progress in his profession, Dr. Smiles perseveres in his chosen path of

* *Life and Letters of Frances Baroness Bunsen.* By Augustus J. C. Hare. (Daldy, Isbister, & Co.)

industrial biography. He has all those advantages of print, paper, and pictorial illustration which render his volumes veritable *livres de luxe*. It is a gracious and useful work which Dr. Smiles has set himself in this work,* as in his last book on Mr. Edwards, to take up 'the obscure and simple annals of the poor.' He has skilfully included in this work some account of Mr. Peach, who, in wild out-of-the-way corners of Cornwall and Scotland, has done steady admirable work in natural science. There are also many interesting details respecting Hugh Miller. We abstain from going into full details of Dick's life, because Dr. Smiles's work has already obtained a very wide circulation and popularity. Dick is a remarkable instance of high thinking and poor living. He found his own happiness and exceeding great reward in studying and deciphering the splendid page of God's Word as revealed in His works. In many Scottish eyes that watched him he seemed sadly unorthodox in his views; but the love of truth and knowledge must have been an acceptable form of worship. Though a poor man, too, he had an amount of theological books that would do credit to many a curate or minister, whether placed or 'stickit' of the Kirk. Dick thoroughly indorsed the feeling of Linnæus, when he (Linnæus) laid his hand on a bit of moss, and said, 'Under this palm is material for the study of a lifetime.' No matter of intellectual interest was foreign to the mind of this wonderful baker. The plaster walls of his bakery were his canvas, which he covered with his firm correct drawings. His last days were very melan-

choly, but they were cheered by his indomitable love of Nature. 'I think myself blest if I can find one moss in the week.' Dr. Smiles gives a touching account of the ejection of the Highlanders from their homes by the great Scottish dukes; but we believe the fact is, that the great Scottish proprietors are now anxious to keep the men at home or to bring them back. Dr. Smiles's hero shows us a wonderful example of perseverance, modesty, and devotion to truth—moral qualities, which in the long-run beat any intellectual qualities—and he may also arouse the valuable and improving suspicion that those who pride themselves on their culture and refinement may be less naturally noble, less truly educated, than many of the poor around us, who are 'God's creatures' as much as ourselves.

We are glad that Mr. Stevenson, the great Scottish engineer, has found a biographer in his son, whose handsome volume* possesses both a scientific value and also a considerable amount of general interest. Stevenson was the Smeaton of Scotland. His Bell Rock Lighthouse is the great monument of his genius in Scotland; and the Wolf Rock Lighthouse on the Cornish coast is also his. His appointment under the Scottish Lighthouse Board gave him this special direction for his engineering ability. On one occasion he lived four months in a tent on a desolate island. A careful study of the Eddystone prepared him for the Bell Rock. A whole fleet of vessels perished in a December storm which might have been saved by a lighthouse; and it was this disaster which produced the ennobling Act of Parliament, which at last achieved this

* *Robert Dick, Baker, of Thurso, Geologist and Botanist.* By Samuel Smiles, LL.D. (Murray.)

* *Life of Robert Stevenson, Civil Engineer.* By David Stevenson. (Adam & Charles Black.)

great northern lighthouse. There is always a peculiar fascination about the story of a lighthouse; and the account of the Inchcape or Bell Rock, with which the curious legend is connected, and the lighthouse Stevenson built, is full of thrilling interest. This was, however, only one department of his industrial career. Roads and railways, harbours and rivers, bridges and ferries, all received his closest attention; and his own writings on scientific subjects have perpetuated the knowledge of his methods and results. We could have wished that there had been more personal details of his career; but we have not much beyond his catalogue of virtues, and the assurance that 'few men had more solid grounds than he for indulging in the pleasing reflection that both in his public and private capacity he had consecrated to beneficial ends every talent committed to his trust.'

We pass on now to an example of literary biography. Mr. Dobell's is rather a pathetic history.* He was in his way a genuine poet and a man of kindly nature. He did not do the work of the Muses slackly, though neither the state of his health nor his business surroundings could have been much in his favour. He was a member of a large wine merchant's firm at Cheltenham, and appears to have been possessed of good business qualities. From a very early age he had a genuine love of literature and great powers of expression. The first part of the work is occupied with a very pretty account of his courtship of the young lady whom he afterwards married; a bit of neat poetry, quite as pretty in its way as anything which he ever

wrote. A five years' courtship came to an end by a marriage when he was only twenty. Soon after he wrote his earliest poem, 'The Roman,' and intellectually this poem was his high-water mark. It was a decided and deserved literary success. We think it rather unfortunate for his genius that he met several Scottish gentlemen, such as George Gillan and Alexander Smith, who flattered him to the top of his bent, and possibly imparted to him a kind of exaggerated self-consciousness. Without doubt he possessed a remarkably lovable and refined nature. His travel letters, though going over hackneyed ground, are full of feeling and poetical observation. The most interesting refer to Scotland, the Isle of Wight, and the south of France. Some of his *morceaux* are interesting; such as his account of Mr. Tennyson; we might also say of 'Dr.' Emily Blackwell, and especially of Charlotte Brontë. There is an intellectual power and moral beauty about the life which to many readers will be more attractive than his writings.

Two works present themselves for notice in legal biography. Mr. O'Flanagan, who has already done a great deal in Irish legal biography, has given us a pleasant chatty volume on the Irish bar.* As he points out, the most renowned Irishmen of modern times have been barristers, and a book with such a title arouses lively expectations. The volume is partly original and partly a compilation. His own circuit is the more pleasing and also the more original part of the work. Such a sketch, for instance, as that of Whiteside, who was continually

* *The Life and Letters of Sydney Dobell.* Edited by E. J. Two vols. (Smith, Elder, & Co.)

* *The Irish Bar*: comprising anecdotes, bon-mots, and biographical sketches. By J. Roderick O'Flanagan. (Sampson Low and Co.)

being pitted against his quiet icy brother-in-law, Mr. Napier, is both amusing and authentic. On the other hand, the sketch of Richard Lalor Sheil is meagre and defective. The sketch of Lord Chief Justice Blackburn is very short. The advice given to a certain Lord Lieutenant was 'Keep a good cook and feast Lord Blackburn.' Another piece of good advice is quoted, given by an attorney to a man who had received a public appointment: 'Do as *little* in your office as ever ye can, *but do that little well.*' We thought that we had exhausted everything that could be said about Curran and O'Connell; but our author has still some fresh stories to tell us. Of course such a book would be incomplete without a notice of John Fitzgibbon, Earl of Clare. A ludicrous incident happened to him which could have happened nowhere out of Ireland. He sentenced a prisoner, a man of good family, to fine and imprisonment, and on his release from imprisonment the man challenged the judge to fight a duel. It is said that the learned judge actually took the advice of a military friend on the point whether he ought to fight or not; but his friend ruled that words spoken in the discharge of an official duty could not be a proper cause for a hostile meeting. There is a good story told of that eminent judge, Lord Guillamore. A stupid jury had acquitted a highwayman, an old offender, whose guilt was perfectly obvious. 'Is there any other indictment against this *innocent* man?' inquired the judge of the Crown solicitor. 'No, my lord.' 'Then tell the gaoler not to let him loose till I get half an hour's start of him; *for I had rather not meet him on the road.*' There is one anecdote which will be read with much appreciation

by gentlemen of the long robe. A noble client, thinking that the counsel's fee had not been marked sufficiently high by his attorney, sent the learned gentleman a gold snuff-box and a hundred pounds. The volume opens with the dark story of the trial of Lord Kingsborough for the murder of Colonel Fitzgerald—a most remarkable story of forensic romance.

We are glad to welcome a memorial volume respecting Mr. M. D. Hill, best known as 'the Recorder of Birmingham.' It is to be lamented that a man of such rare abilities did not attain to a higher judicial position; but few judges and jurists have proved themselves such a living power in the improved administration of the criminal law. He had the good fortune to become engaged to a sensible young lady, Miss Bucknall, and his letters to her are perfect models of this kind of writing. Mr. Hill had some success both in Parliament and at the bar; he possessed a great variety and versatility of gifts; he was the contemporary, on equal terms, of many of the most celebrated men of his day; but he finally settled into the groove of philanthropy, tempered by literature. He took a leading part in the Prison Congress, which was held in London—last year it was at Stockholm—and he, if any man, thoroughly understood the troublesome convict question. People learned to look out for Mr. Hill's charges to the grand jury of the Birmingham sessions, as the best manifestoes of humanitarian principles in the treatment of criminals. He was admirably seconded by Mary Carpenter; and most of our modern improvements are indirectly due to him and the other disciples of Jeremy Bentham. There is rather a paucity of interesting personal matter.

The account of his first interview with Bentham is good. De Quincy tells an amusing story in a letter to Mr. Hill. The Hon. Mrs. M. used to sum up the story of her marriage thus: 'Yes; the colonel and I had a hundred thousand pounds between us when I married—just a hundred thousand pounds;' and then, after a little pause, she added, with an air of indifference, 'Yes, just; I had ninety-nine and the colonel had one.' It is to be wished that there was a larger amount of *ana* in this biography. It certainly gives us a most favourable idea of Mr. Hill's goodness and intellectual powers.

Two political biographies shall be taken—one a foreign and one a home subject. Those who study the politics of Central Asia, which are daily assuming enlarged importance, will read with considerable instruction and interest Mr. Boulger's *Life of Yakoob Beg*.* Our friends who study the penny dailies must take care not to confound for a moment the Yakoob Beg of this book with the Yakoob Khan of Afghanistan correspondents. Our Yakoob Beg of the volume before us was a soldier of fortune, who in a wonderful manner constructed, by sheer force of genius, a personal rule for a space of a dozen years, which then came to nothing, after the fashion of so many Oriental Governments. The subject is interesting, and might serve for a romance, only we must warn our readers that the author has carefully eliminated well-nigh all the interest and romance of his subject. Mr. Boulger is a member of the Royal Asiatic Society, and he seems to take it for granted that all his readers are considerably Asiatic in

their tastes and information. He brings out the attitude of the three contending powers in Asia, the British, the Russian, the Chinese. We cannot agree with Mr. Boulger that 'of these China is in many respects the foremost.' Either Russia or England is far more than a match for China, while from the solidarity of her power and disinterestedness of her aims the Empire of India stands foremost on the Asiatic map. Russia gained more from China in commercial matters, through friendship, than we gained through our three victorious wars. Russia, however, has lost the friendship of China, which might be worth many provinces to her, by unjustly retaining possession of Kuldja; which is of course so much to the good as regards British interests. Yakoob was an English ally of ours, but we do not seem to have taken much pains to cultivate his good graces. On the marriage of the Duke of Edinburgh he had the impudence to send his congratulations to the Czar, 'saying that he had heard that the son of his good ally, the Queen of England, was about to wed the daughter of his friend the Czar, and that he hastened to send him congratulations.' No reply was vouchsafed to this communication of Yakoob Beg. He found that he was leaning on a broken reed when he trusted us against Russia, just as Yakoob Khan experienced the same thing when he trusted Russia against us, Yakoob Beg, the first of the Central Asiatic powers, was overthrown at last, and the Chinese reconquered Kashgar. Wherever they conquer they turn the wilderness into a garden, but they always conquer with ruthless cruelty. The chapter which our politicians will read with most interest is the concluding one on 'The Central Asian Question.' We quite agree

* *Life of Yakoob Beg, Athalik Gazi, and Badaulet, Ameer of Kashgar.* By D. C. Boulger. (Allen & Co.)

with Mr. Boulger that English Governments 'have never understood the vitality of Chinese institutions;' but when he argues that the British Empire would necessarily go down before a combination of China and Russia, we must venture to express our dissent from him.

William Cobbett had in every respect such a thorough and vigorous nature—with all his Radicalism he was so true a patriot, with all his asperity he had such a kindly nature—that it was well worth while to gather up a formal biography of his life and his works. Mr. Smith's main justification of his undertaking* will be that he has obtained some new letters and reminiscences. His most formidable rival is William Cobbett himself. That racy autobiography must necessarily leave us dissatisfied with any other biography. The ethical value of Cobbett's life was very great. When seventy years old he could write: 'I have led the happiest life of any man that I have ever known. Never did I know one single moment when I was cast down; never one moment when I dreaded the future.' Even when he was imprisoned for many months he passed the time very happily. It is worth while to master such an extraordinary life. As a private soldier he studied military science as if bent on a field-marshal's *bâton*. In America he was intrepidly English among the Republicans. When he came home everything seemed dwarfed. 'When I returned to England the trees, the hedges, even the parks and woods, seemed so small. It made me laugh to hear little gutters that I could jump over called *rivers*. The Thames was

but a *creek*. Everything was become so pitifully small.' For all that, he found his true home in England. Most of the reforms which he advocated have now passed into law. But at the same time it must be remembered, in justice to the Government of that day, that perhaps the time was not come when they might be adopted with safety. He was elected a member of the first reformed Parliament, but too late, not long surviving. He was one of the raciest of writers and honestest of men. Greville mentions him as one of the 'few bad characters' who had been returned, but his reputation will stand higher than Greville's.

As an example of what we may call 'still' biography, we can heartily commend the memoir of the late Mr. Hodgson, Provost of Eton, by his son.* Mr. Hodgson has his own niche in literary history through his early and intense friendship with Byron. Hodgson was the best friend of his best moments. There is a certain amount of original matter respecting Lord and Lady Byron. Lord Byron gains, and his wife becomes depreciated, in the estimate of these pages. She seems to have been unloving and unforgiving; and these volumes give us another instance of the abrupt unfeeling way in which she could terminate the friendships of years at her own caprice. When Hodgson wanted to marry free from debt Byron insisted on giving him a thousand pounds. What a contrast there was between the two friends! The one led a life of learned seclusion as poet, scholar, and divine, discharging every office of life with dignity and success, and dying full of years and honours; the

* *William Cobbett: a Biography*. By Edward Smith. Two vols. (Sampson Low & Co.)

* *Memoir of the Rev. Francis Hodgson, B.D.* By his Son, the Rev. James T. Hodgson, M.A. (Macmillan.)

other, self-consumed by his own passions and his own glory. It says something for the moral nature of Byron, that he was able to find this close affinity to his friend. But Hodgson was in truth the most interesting and charming of men. Every one loved him, from the villagers of Bakewell to his great neighbours in their 'dukeries.' The late Duke of Devonshire writes to him: 'On Monday I go to Woburn for the royal visit there. The Queen *boasted* to me in London of having seen you, and told of your reception of her.' Again he writes: 'The Queen knew your picture directly at Chatsworth, and called her husband to come back and look at it.' The last Duke of Devonshire appears in a very amiable light in these pages; he is full of kindness. He writes a capital letter, and is altogether a higher style of character than most of his contemporaries took him to be. When Hodgson married a second time—it was to a daughter of Lord Denman's—the duke lent him Hardwick Hall for his honeymoon, and when he wanted sea air lent him his house at Kemp Town, Brighton: 'You are by no means to leave Kemp Town when you say; you must stay as long as it is agreeable to you to remain by the seaside. If I should take it into my head to want to go to Brighton I should like so much to find you there; and I should have my bedroom and library as usual, and you

would not be in the least disturbed.' The duke tells of the death of a friend, Lady Elizabeth, who died after four days' illness in consequence of eating ices at a ball. Other interesting anecdotes might be gathered. Mrs. Leigh, Lord Byron's sister, describes a party at the house of a lady whom Dickens subsequently immortalised in the character of Mrs. Leo Hunter. Sir Joseph Paxton was originally chosen by the Duke of Devonshire from a row of village lads brought before him as candidates for a place in the gardens at Chatsworth. We have a striking sentence relative to the character of the late Lord Denman. When Empson, the editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, was dying, he said, 'Send my love to Denman; and tell him that I do not forget how long I lived under the shadow of his noble nature.' Late in life Lord Melbourne gave Hodgson the Provostship of Eton. As his carriage first drove through the Playing Fields he exclaimed, 'Please God I will do something for these poor boys.' The Provost certainly set his mark on Eton. He abolished the Montem—apparently, however, to the Queen's regret—among other reforms, restored the collegiate church, established the school library, and introduced the study of modern languages. He had a perpetual fountain of wit and humour, and, as Byron prophesied, he rhymed to the end of the chapter. His last word was 'charming.'

ACROSTIC PRIZE-WINNERS.

THE following are the names and addresses of the three successful solvers of the acrostics which have appeared in *London Society*. The total sum of the three prizes, namely 40*l.*, has been equally divided, and a cheque for the amount has been sent to each of the three winners:

Mrs. W. J. CHETWODE CRAWLEY ('C O M'), 66 Mountjoy-square, W., Dublin.
Miss HOLLWAY ('Araba'), Staunton House, Exeter Park, Bournemouth, Hants.
ARTHUR W. PANTON, Esq. ('Kanitbeko'), 36 Trinity College, Dublin.

LONDON SOCIETY.

MAY 1879.

FAIR MAY OF MAYFAIR.

A Chronicle of Curzon-street.

BY W. W. FENN,

AUTHOR OF 'HALF-HOURS OF BLIND MAN'S HOLIDAY,' ETC.

It was that incorrigible wag and insatiable newsmonger, Mark Beckwink, Esq., who christened her, and the fatuous familiarity of fashionable Mayfair soon led to the general adoption of the phrase. Society was tickled by the quaint inversion of the names, and, as really little or nothing was known about the young lady, it was held to be a highly humorous mode of speaking of her. Indeed, beyond the fact that her youth, extreme beauty, and gracious manners had turned the heads of the young swells who had been introduced to her, she was a mystery even to her name. She was simply called 'May' by the few who were on familiar terms with her, and 'Miss May' by the many whose acquaintance was more distant.

Old Lady Tresselton brought her out, and introduced her, at the fag-end of the season of 1860, as her young friend May; but whence she came or who she was, the haughty dowager gave no hint. Very few people had the courage to press the old lady upon any point she was reticent on; and when one or two intrepid individuals made the attempt to elucidate this 'May' mystery, they

were so pointedly shut up, or their questions so cleverly evaded, that return as they would to the charge, they were always worsted. Notorious for her imperious and eccentric ways, it was finally set down that this was only one of the many fads the aristocratic dame was constantly going in for. Her fancies and whims were never questioned; her birth and position, in spite of her want of wealth, warranted what she did as 'the right thing,' no matter how odd or queer.

Sir Hans Tresselton, third baronet, had left her a widow with one son, thirty years ago; but the lad never went quite straight, and at the age of four-and-twenty went out to the West Indies, where his father had property, and there died within twelve months. Ever since this event Lady Tresselton had shown at intervals a partiality for protecting and patronising some one. May was by no means her first favourite, though of the three previous ones she had never hesitated to give a full and particular account, which led to each and all getting well settled in life. In short, she was a matchmaker; it had become her hobby, and it was

thought that it was only her reticence regarding her present *protégée* that held back the ambitious youth of the hour. However, as I have said, May being all that a fashionable young lady should be, and a most delightful girl to boot, she was gradually accepted without much further questioning.

'Pon my life, she's a regular stunner!' young Falkham of the Life Guards Grey was declaring one evening during the season of 1861 to Beckwink, the lad of all others most likely to know who was who. 'But who do you think she really is, Marco?'

Amongst the coterie of young swells who frequented the smoking-room of the Dardy Club, where the talk was going on, nobody was supposed to know so much as Beckwink. He was the real referee in all matters of fashionable mystery; but he had long confessed himself baffled about Miss May, though his defeated curiosity was solaced when he found how popular his cognomen for her had become.

'I never can tell what the deuce her name is,' he answered. 'Whether May is her Christian or surname, or both, or either, I'll be hanged if I can tell! I've tried the old woman from all sides, but never get any nearer. So sure as I lead up to the question, and think I've cornered her, some confounded thing turns the conversation, or the old girl turns it herself with such dexterity that you are nowhere again in a minute. Once I said point-blank, "Is May a Christian or a surname?" and Lady Tresselton answered coolly, "Whichever you like; it is short for Mary, or Martha, or Margaret, and ought always to be used when people give their children such dreadful names as these. Sometimes a girl is christened May;

and I once knew a Captain May, a very gallant soldier." "Yes," I said; "but I am thinking of Miss May, your—" "Ah," broke in the old woman instantly, "you are not singular in that, Mr. Beckwink; a good many young men are thinking of her, but they seem only to think; none of them have spoken yet; the field is still open. O, you are sad fellows, you men, nowadays; very few of you have the courage of your opinions." And do you know,' went on Beckwink, as he recounted this conversation to his friend, 'I think the old woman was making a bid for me? But, hang it all, you know, one could not marry a girl unless you knew her name!'

'But perhaps her name *is* May,' said Falkham, with a wag of his sapient head.

'Perhaps it is. Why, of course it is!'

'But I mean Miss May, don't you know?'

'Well, that's what I say, Falkie; she's called Miss May; but May what: that's what I want to know.'

'Why, May, I keep telling you,' urged the Guardsman.

'Confound it, I know that as well as you do; but you won't pretend to tell me that her name is Miss May May: it would be quite too ridiculous for anybody to have such a name.'

'Bet you a pony that's it, Marco!'

'I will trouble you, gentlemen, to take care what you say about that young lady,' here interrupted a tall, lean, hatchet-faced, but distinguished-looking young man, with a set sneer wrinkling his right nostril, upper lip, and eyebrow. He had been lounging listlessly through the room, and had accidentally come within ear-shot of the speakers. 'It is coming to pass,' he continued, taking

a huge cigar from his lips, 'that before next fall, Miss May will have fixed her name to one that I guess you will not take in vain.'

'Indeed! What, is she going to be married? Whose name is she going to honour?' asked Beckwink excitedly.

'Mine, sir; the Hon. Jaspar G. Ruse—at your service.'

'Have not the pleasure of knowing you.'

'No,' here hurriedly broke in Major Hernehill, another of the Dardy set, who had just followed Mr. Ruse up to the speakers. 'I ought to have introduced my friend. Let me present you, Mr. Ruse—Mr. Beckwink, Mr. Falkham. Mr. Ruse is attached to the American Legation, and has only been in England a week, so I'll trouble you fellows to be civil to him.'

'Then there was a feeble laugh, and a buzz, and an awkward, 'O, very glad! Ah, yes, delighted!' and Beckwink and Falkham held out their hands to the stranger. This gave a pleasant turn to the talk, which for a moment had promised to become otherwise; but, after one or two more conventional remarks, in which of course the lady's name did not appear, the knot of men broke up. Beckwink soon after, however, was buttonholing Hernehill in a corner; for that purveyor of gossip could not rest until he had learned the top and the tail of this startling news about Fair May.

'Well,' said Hernehill, 'I had best give you the tip, straight out, as far as I know, or else you'll be drawing on your imagination. I know you, Mark; you never like to appear in the dark long. Ruse there, the Yankee, brought very good letters—one to Lady Tresselton; and like his countrymen went ahead in no time; had not been to the house twice before he pro-

posed for the girl, put his circumstances before the old lady; she approved, and the American goes in to win, and wins. The girl says "yes," and there's an end of it; and they are to be married the end of the season.'

'Astounding!' said Beckwink; 'and to think you should have heard all this before me!'

'Ah, my boy, behindhand for once, eh? and I'll lay odds you don't know another bit of news about our friend. You are getting quite out of the running. What has come to you, old man?'

'O, humbug! What more do you know? True, I have been away in Burke's yacht for a fortnight; lots of things happen in a fortnight. Tell us, what is it?'

'Well, then, simply this: the day before the Hon. Jaspar turned up, Fair May refused Charlie Hampden.'

'What! you don't mean to say *he* proposed?'

'Positive fact: and he is gone off, very hard hit, to the States; going to fight for the South, he says, and hopes a Northerner's bullet will settle the question, and that sort of thing.'

'You do astonish me! Who would have thought it! Why, Charlie Hampden has been about the whole season, looking as fit as a fiddle. He kept it very dark.'

'Yes; still waters, you know; but what I say is true for all that.'

'Why, he has not a penny in the world! What was he going to marry on?'

'Ah, there's the rub; old lady wouldn't stand it. Good family all very well, but money is her caper. Girl has not a screw, we may be sure; and her ladyship means to settle her well, as she has her other pets. Now the Honourable Jaspar is no end of a catch, and for a Northerner comes

of a good stock; but Lady Tresselton in this case looks more to money than birth, take my word for it. There, Marco, my boy,' added the speaker, giving his friend a slap on the shoulder, 'I flatter myself I have told you enough to make you happy and keep you going.'

'Daresay you have,' retorted Beckwink, somewhat grimly for him. 'But now I should just like to ask you a question *apropos* of this young person. Hernehill, old man, you are a shrewd observer, and I wonder if you have ever noticed it. Very few fellows have; indeed, it has only struck me quite lately; but have you ever seen her hands?'

'What, Miss May's?'

'Yes.'

'Why, of course! How can a fellow see a girl without seeing her hands?'

'Pshaw! I mean without her gloves,' continued Beckwink impatiently.

Hernehill paused, cogitated, and then answered,

'No; I don't know that I ever have, now that you put it to me.'

'No, nor any one else!' said Beckwink triumphantly. 'I have asked lots of fellows who have met her and danced with her, and they all say they have never seen her take her gloves off. No, sir; she never takes them off, not even at dinner.'

'That's curious; but what do the women say?'

'Just the same; they never catch her without her gloves.'

'It's a pretty little hand, as far as I remember,' said Hernehill. 'Colour wrong, or what?'

'It's a tremendous mystery, that's what it is,' exclaimed the little gentleman almost gravely. 'The more I think of it, the more I'm bothered. I will find out the reason somehow.'

'Well, Mark, you'll have a chance soon. She must take her glove off when she gets married.'

'True, by Jove!' cried Beckwink with glee. 'I never thought of that, of course. When do you say the wedding is to be?'

'The beginning of August, I believe; so Mr. Ruse told me: he ought to know.'

'I shall assist at that ceremony,' said Beckwink deliberately, and with the air of a man who saw his way. 'When the ring has to be put on, if something strange does not happen, my name is not Mark Beckwink.'

Hernehill was convulsed with laughter at his friend's manner.

'What a fellow you are!' he cried; 'you have the rummest notions.'

But Beckwink evidently did not see the joke.

'It's all very well,' he said, 'but what with the secrecy about her name, and this strange fact of her never taking her gloves off, the girl is a mystery, an enigma, which it shall be my business to solve.' And with a preoccupied 'good-night,' he quitted the room before Hernehill's laughter had subsided.

A fashionable wedding at the end of a London season. What are hearts in comparison to dresses on such an occasion? Wherever the former may be worn, it is certainly not on the sleeve that they are then to be found. And yet it is of hearts that I have to write in this case. So the gorgeous array must be imagined, and I can simply say that the bride was lovely, and like a floating dream-cloud of pearly purity; that her elderly patroness and protector looked handsome, stately, and gratified; that the bridesmaids seemed to be far-off imitations of her in whose wake they followed;

that the bridegroom, albeit somewhat strange of aspect, stood expectant in his proper place; the clergy and other necessary actors in the scene, in theirs; whilst every available space within the sacred walls was filled by a throng of well-dressed lookers-on. Foremost amongst these, we may be sure, is Mark Beckwink, Esq., eagerly watching the proceedings, and ever and anon turning to comment on them in a whisper to his friend Hernehill. This gentleman responds with less than usual of his nonchalant manner, and as if impressed by unexpected and curious possibilities.

All is going smoothly and in proper sequence; the appropriate silence reigns, yet the approaches to the altar are so crowded, that, save to those in the front rank, none of the minor acts and details of the ceremony are visible; and therefore, by the progress of the solemn words alone, as they fall from priestly lips, can the masses of spectators tell what stage in the simple service has been reached.

Presently there is a pause, and the whisper, 'Take your glove off,' is plainly audible. The pause continues; an eagerness to press a little forward is shown by a certain knot of the congregation nearest to the bride. The whisper is repeated; and as doubtless the request is being nervously complied with, the clergyman slowly, and with impressive solemnity, puts the crucial question, 'Wilt thou, Jasper, have this woman to be thy wedded wife?' Again a pause; and then suddenly, amidst amazement and surprise, a ringing, sharp, metallic 'No!' is heard—heard to the uttermost corners of the church.

The bridegroom has taken the hand, timidly and reluctantly held forth. He has looked at it keenly,

eagerly; stepped back a pace, repeated for one second his examination of the delicate finger-tips, and then flung it from him as the fatal 'No!' was uttered.

Above and through the buzz of consternation here ensuing, can be distinguished such angry and hurried words as, 'Never if I know it! I guess I don't make a match like that! I had no notion such a thing could be!' And whilst all the men standing near the bridegroom crowd round him, and with eager questions and ill-suppressed expressions of angry denunciation hurry him away to the vestry, the women rush forward to the bride, who stands pale and trembling by the altar-rail.

The scene which follows, again like the dresses and decorations of the drama, can be better imagined than described, at least by me. What does it mean? What is the cause? What can have happened? What did he see on her hand? These and the like ejaculations are dominant among the multitude, as, hustling and bustling, excited, curious, and amused, it, gradually dispersing, leaves the church.

Not, however, until some time after the bride has been hurried off in her carriage by her women-friends, does the excitement begin to subside. Groups of people linger about the doors, curious to learn the reason for this unexpected termination to a marriage. One of the little knots, standing near the vestry-entrance in a quiet by-lane, is rewarded by witnessing another striking episode in the play.

As the tall, thin, angular figure of the chief actor emerges, after a while, from the door, accompanied still by several men with perplexed faces, he is met on the threshold by a stalwart young swell, who has come round from

the main entrance with the little crowd.

'Your name is Ruse, I believe,' he says angrily; 'mine is Hampden. I have no authority at present from the friends of the young lady, whom you have so grossly insulted, to take up her cause; but if the day ever does come when I have, you shall answer to me for this outrage.'

The American, with his set sneer, looks slowly up and down the speaker, as it were, and then says,

'Yes, sir; I will answer you, sir, or any man living, anywhere, anyhow you like. I guess I am not ashamed of what I have done. I should be everlastingly ashamed if I had done otherwise, hard and cruel as the disappointment is to me—harder, I reckon, than to anybody else.'

'This is no place for explanation; but—' Hampden is going on, when he is interrupted by Major Hernehill, who at that moment comes out of the vestry-door with Beckwink. Seizing Hampden by the arm, he cries, with a look of amazement,

'Good God, Charlie, you here! I thought you were the other side of the world! But come out of this, come with me, come away at once; we will tell you all about it;' and hurrying him off, the friends disappear round the corner of the short passage, leaving the few witnesses of the scene more open-mouthed with wonder than ever.

Beckwink's rooms were not a stone's-throw from the church, and thither we will follow the three friends; for not until they had hurriedly settled to retire there was anything like a clear explanation of this strange affair entered upon. Imagining once more the confusion of incoherent questions and answers, we will

take up the talk only when it becomes a little consequent and intelligible.

Hampden is saying excitedly,

'No; I could not stand it. I was harder hit than I thought; and when I got to Liverpool I had not the pluck to go on to the States, so I went over to some of my people in Yorkshire. I could not make up my mind to leave the country in which she still was. I had a presentiment, don't you know, that there might be a chance for me yet. And, by Jove, it looks now as if there were! I heard she was going to be married, so I came back last night, and the same sort of presentiment impelled me to go to the church. But tell me, Marco, once again, exactly what this fellow said.'

Beckwink, eager as ever to retail news, then recounted in detail what had hitherto only been given in short and broken ejaculations.

'You see,' he went on, in his usual airy and playful manner, 'when we all crowded into the vestry, and the reverend gentleman gets him into a corner, and puts it to him, according to the rubric, which runneth somewhat to his effect: "At which day of marriage, if any man do allege and declare any impediment," &c., "then the solemnisation," &c., "must be deferred," &c., then the Honourable Jasper G. Ruse explains himself. I must say I never saw a fellow look so yellow; in fact, he was all colours, and no wonder, for it was what his countrymen call "a tarnation fix"! In two words, he says, "I cannot marry that girl, for the simple reason that she has black blood in her veins." He declared he had no idea of it until he saw her hand, but her delicate fingertips betrayed her. "The faint dark tinge which she has beneath

her nails," he said, "was a plain and unmistakable proof of her origin." I have always heard this is the case,' continued Beckwink, 'and that this sign never escapes the initiated and prejudiced eye of a Northern American. I must do Mr. Ruse the justice to say that he was much moved, and once or twice quite overcome. He said he had fallen in love with her at first sight; that his affection had increased the more he knew her; and he complained bitterly that the forms of our English etiquette had forbidden any approach to those slight familiarities which might have allowed him to discover her secret before things had gone so far. He cited, as an instance, the fact that he had never held her hand for a single moment ungloved. Old Lady Tresselton never left them alone together—kept him at a distance, on the *noli me tangere* principle, and always put him on his best behaviour. He cursed these formalities of our society as the cause of the whole disaster; "for," he went on, with more dignity than I could have given him credit for, "whatever comes of it, however much my own affections and feelings are wounded, I reckon that my social status would be gone for ever in my country, setting aside my own self-respect, if I contracted an alliance with a woman whose blood is tainted with that of the negro, however far back." Then Ruse turned to Lady Tresselton's old friend Haller, whom she had got to come and give the bride away, and said, "How Lady Tresselton is going to make it out to her own conscience for having hoodwinked me in the matter, I do not pretend to judge, sir; but when it comes to speaking of insult, I calculate I am the person who

has been insulted and outraged; and had it been you, Mr. Haller, who had been the young girl's guardian instead of an old woman, and had negotiated the affair from the beginning, as she did—well, sir, whatever the law of your country may be, I should have taken it into my own hands, though you are an old man." I cannot pretend to tell you fellows,' continued Beckwink, 'half that passed. There was such a clamour and rattle of tongues, I never assisted at such a scene in my life!'

'But,' broke in Hampden, 'is it a fact? Do you suppose that that sweet, pure, delicate-complexioned girl can have had any dark ancestry? Not that it matters a rap to me. I would marry her this moment if even she had a grandfather as black as ink; for, as I admit, I never was so hard hit before;' and the good-looking young fellow rose from his chair, flushed and thoughtful, and began pacing the room.

'I quite agree with you,' said Beckwink. 'What the deuce have you to do with Miss May's origin? She is a thorough lady in every sense of the word, delightful, charming; and if you love her, that's enough, isn't it? always provided she loves you.'

'At the same time,' said Hernehill, 'we must remember, in justice to Ruse, that he has been grossly deceived, and that the Northerners do not take this view of the subject. The prejudice is utterly absurd, we know; but to them it's a matter of social ostracism, almost of life and death; and just now, whilst they are at war with the South, they are keener about the whole subject than ever.'

'Yes,' cried Beckwink; 'to the true Yankee, "a nigger is pison whenever met." I have never been in the States myself;

but fellows who have tell me that he will not get into a railway-carriage—will barely go into a room where a nigger is sitting. And yet, by Jove, they are all for letting them loose—the slaves, I mean. Well, free country—do as you like—all right, I daresay ; but I am no good at these things—don't understand them.'

'Ah, slaves ; yes, to be sure,' cried Hampden, suddenly bringing his restless pacing to and fro to a standstill, as though a thought had struck him. 'Have not I heard that Sir Hans Tresselton (the old woman's husband, you know) at one time owned a large property in the West Indies?—sugar-canes and that sort of thing.'

'Yes, certainly,' answered Beckwink ; 'and it was to look after it that the only scion of the noble house went out, years ago, don't you know? and caught yellow fever, or had D.T. or something, and never came back. I recollect hearing all about it when I was a boy at Eton.'

'Then,' said Hampden, dropping into an easy chair and vigorously slapping the one leg which he threw across the other, 'take my word for it, if what this Yankee says be a fact, then this dear sweet girl, about whom there has always hung a certain mystery, is some connection of the Tresseltons!'

'What,' cried Beckwink, suddenly becoming portentously grave at the prospect of fresh revelations, 'do you think so?'

'Very likely ; for you must know,' continued Hampden, 'when I proposed for her, I had a long talk with Lady Tresselton, who, after all, was very civil to me throughout the whole affair ; never bullied me, you know, nor anything of that kind ; only said it could not possibly be. I had nothing, and May had nothing,

her father having died far away, after losing all his property by wild speculation.'

'Did she say who her father was?'

'Not exactly ; but left me to assume that it was a certain Captain May, a great friend of her son's, and that somehow it was out of regard for this friendship that she (the old lady) had taken up the girl.'

'But where did she take her up from?' asked Beckwink. 'Where has she been all this time?'

'O, at school in Paris ; but of course Lady Tresselton would not be very explicit with a detrimental like myself.'

'I shall make it my business,' said Beckwink, with his most important air, 'to find it all out. I really am on the right track at last.'

'Don't trouble yourself, my dear fellow ; my mind is made up,' said Hampden, again rising and putting on his hat. 'To-morrow I shall call in Curzon-street, and insist on seeing the old lady, and renew my offer. She will listen to it now, I'll bet you anything ; and I know the girl likes me : I found that out in spite of Lady Tresselton. Of course my darling didn't care for the Yankee ; hadn't known him a week when she was forced into saying "Yes." I suppose, when she saw she must give me up, she was utterly reckless, and didn't care.'

We must suppose that these confidences would hardly have passed so unreservedly, but for the strange conjunction of events which had brought the three friends together. However this may be, having once commenced, they continued ; and Hernehill and Beckwink were eventually instrumental in smoothing away many little social difficulties, especially with regard to Mr. Ruse,

which arose through Hampden's now impetuous pursuit of his purpose. And when, three or four months later, he carried his point, and was married to the girl of his choice, Mark Beckwink, Esq., did not fail to attribute the successful issue of his friend's suit to his own clever diplomacy.

'Of course, I managed it,' he said to Falkham (who revered Mark's genius). 'When I saw Hampden was determined—rather rash of him, perhaps, but that was not my affair—I made it my business, as I said I would, to get at the top and the tail of the whole story; no matter *how* I did it, but I did.'

'Yes,' inquired Falkham; 'and you found out who she really was?'

'Certainly. Old Lady Tresselton's grandchild, daughter of her only son, the noble scion, who, having contracted an alliance with a beautiful Octoroon—in short, having married one of the slaves on his father's property—died before the offspring of the union was born. But, knowing his end was near (and, it seems, being very fond of his wife), he consigned her and, as the poets would put it, her unborn babe to the charge of a great friend of his, a Captain May. There you are, Falkie—there's the secret; don't you see? He, true to his trust, represents the case to Lady Tresselton. She, though very indignant at her son's *mésalliance*, con-

done it—maternal instinct, and that sort of thing; won't have anything to do with the wife, who remains in her native land, but goes in for the child; has her brought up in Paris; never, indeed, loses sight of her; and finally determines, when she is the right age, to present her to the world.'

'Ah, by Jove! Yes, curious, quite romantic,' says Falkham. 'But what about the name May?'

'O, that was the result of the old woman's pride. Could not fancy acknowledging the girl outright; and having had her christened May from regard to her son's friend, made a mystery about it. Did not choose, as she confided to me, to be bullied into telling anything. The dark fingernails were always a great trouble to her; but she thought she had got over it by the perpetual gloves. Forgot the American prejudice, and of course never expected the Yankee to cut up rough, as he did. However, it has all come right at last. Charlie Hampden and his wife are quite happy, although, with only four or five hundred a year, they cannot live within reach of Mayfair. Still, as I tell him, what of that? He can always be within reach of Fair May.'

And the humorous young gentleman wagged his head with justifiable complacency at the witty turn he was thus enabled to give to his already original phrase.

A LONG HALT IN THE NECKAR-THAL.

ONE of the happiest ideas I ever had was a sudden fancy for taking up my quarters in the old university town of Heidelberg, not as a mere bird of passage, but with the view of residing there as long as I found it to my taste. That it proved so may be gathered from the fact that, having originally decided on a period of six months as the probable duration of my stay, I remained there nearly three years, and quitted with extreme regret the pleasant valley which had become to me something very like home, and will always be connected in my memory with the most agreeable associations of my life. Since then I have frequently revisited it; and although many of the once familiar faces are now missing—for Time, alas, is no respecter of persons—yet the place, notwithstanding the inevitable changes occasioned by a lapse of almost twenty years, has lost none of its primitive charm, and invariably appears to me as attractive, as *gemüthlich* as ever.

Unlike the majority of small German towns, including the neighbouring capitals of Carlsruhe and Darmstadt, both remarkable for their ugliness and dulness, and Mannheim, which, if possible, is more suggestive of melancholy than either, Heidelberg, partly owing to the constant influx of strangers, partly to its ever-varying population of students, is as gay and lively a residence as any that can be found within the limits of the Teutonic empire. One important point in its favour is its exceptional position, afford-

ing the utmost facility for excursions in every direction; Mannheim being easily accessible by train in half an hour, and Frankfort, Stuttgart, or Baden-Baden in two hours and a half; while a quarter of an hour's trip by the branch-line skirting the right bank of the Neckar carries you into the heart of as picturesque a country as poet or painter could reasonably desire. The town itself, necessarily of no great extent, built as it is on a narrow strip of ground between hill and river, has nothing formal or even regular in its appearance; its principal thoroughfare being a long straggling street, the extremities of which terminate respectively in the main roads to Mannheim and Neckargemünd. Parallel with it runs the Anlage, a promenade shaded by pink-blossoming chestnut-trees, and bordered by rows of hotels, *pensions*, and private houses mostly occupied by the university professors and their pupils; and above it on the right, as you leave the railway station, are the wooded heights of the Wolfshöhle and the winding carriage-road leading to the Speiererhof. Between the Anlage and the Hauptstrasse are two streets especially patronised by the English colony, the Theater Strasse and the Friedrichstrasse; in each of these the houses are chiefly let in flats for the convenience of visitors, and in my time spacious and comfortably furnished apartments might be had there at an extremely low rate. Since the war, prices have risen considerably, but not more

so than in other towns of the duchy ; and the floating population having rather increased than diminished of late years, it is presumable that the inhabitants are gradually recovering their senses, and have too much regard for their golden geese to scare them away by unreasonably prohibitive tariffs.

As an educational resort Heidelberg is unrivalled ; the best instruction in every branch of science, literature, and art may be obtained there at a comparatively nominal cost, varying from a florin to a florin and a half per lesson ; and the same consideration for limited budgets is observable in the charges for medical attendance ; the fee of an ordinary practitioner being thirty kreutzers, and in no case exceeding a florin. Provisions are fairly good and cheap ; the most delicious breakfast-rolls I ever tasted are made by a baker in the vicinity of the Prinz Carl Hotel, and in the season hares, partridges, and even quarters of *chevreuil* are hawked about the streets in abundance ; fruit (especially grapes and black cherries) and vegetables are plentiful and moderate in price ; and meat, though as a rule answering in quality to what the French butchers term the 'second category,' is certainly not inferior to that usually met with in other parts of Southern Germany. Fish, on the contrary, is scarce and dear ; the small supply of trout from the Wolfsbrunnen, and the few samples of Rhine salmon that occasionally find their way into the market, being entirely monopolised by the hotel proprietors ; and with respect to poultry, unless the present specimens have forfeited the reputation of their predecessors for exiguity and toughness, perhaps the less said the better. The ordinary wines of the country,

Markgräfler and Affenthaler, are wholesome and palatable, and average from sixpence to tenpence a bottle ; and it is worth while to dine now and then at the Prinz Carl, for the sake of indulging in a peculiar nectar of which that far-famed establishment has the specialty, called Forster-Tramin. A serious item in the family expenditure during the winter months is that of firewood, which is brought into the town in carts from the neighbouring woods, and sold at the rate of about thirty florins a load ; fresh supplies of this indispensable commodity arrive daily from September to April, and the wood being drier and cheaper at the commencement of the autumn than it is towards Christmas, prudent householders are in the habit of laying in a stock long before they are likely to require it.

There is no lack of excellent shops in Heidelberg ; many of them, indeed, would bear comparison with the best models of the kind on the Zeil at Frankfort ; and I may particularly instance that of Herr Kochenburger in the Hauptstrasse as an emporium where, to quote the remark of an old Welsh captain who passed half his days there, ' You can buy anything except a leg of mutton.' Its owner began business in a very small way some five-and-twenty years ago, by selling pins, needles, silk, and worsted, and attributes his rise in the world solely to a horseshoe, which he originally inserted for luck's sake in the pavement in front of his humble abode, and has carefully transferred to a similar position before the handsome premises he now occupies. Thinking to pay him a compliment, I once suggested that he might safely consider himself indebted for his good fortune to his own perseverance and industry ;

but he abruptly negatived the idea: 'Ohne das Hufeisen,' he said decisively, 'wäre ich noch ein armer Lump' (Without the horse-shoe I should still be a poor devil).

It is the custom to dine early in this primitive locality, one o'clock being the usual hour, and few venturing to brave public opinion by deferring their repast later than two. I cannot vouch for the present state of their appetites, but in my time the worthy townspeople (that is to say, the male portion of them) appeared to be perpetually eating or drinking from morning till night. For example, after a hearty breakfast of coffee and bread-and-butter at eight, a slight snack, consisting of a huge slice of bread and sausage, or whatever else came conveniently to hand, was conscientiously absorbed between ten and eleven, this refection being succeeded as a matter of course by a glass or two of beer as a preparatory ante-prandial relish; while at one a goodly allowance of soup, boiled beef, and horse-radish sauce, followed by *nudeln* or other farinaceous compounds, constituted the ordinary midday meal. From three to four came coffee: not the digestive *café noir* in which epicures delight, but substantial *café au lait*, served in breakfast-cups and accompanied by a liberal supply of the never-failing *kuchen*; and this adjunct to the dinner disposed of, the exhausted stomach was permitted to rest until supper-time, after which by no means stinted collation—the favourite dish being cold veal and plums stewed in vinegar—there was a general adjournment to the *kneipe*, where the remainder of the evening was profitably spent in the consumption of Limburger cheese and unlimited *schoppen*.

The society of the place, as I

remember it, was divided into two distinct categories, neither of them, except on rare occasions, amalgamating with the other: these were the university coterie, chiefly composed of professors and their wives; and the foreign contingent, comprising the stranger residents and birds of passage, and the few German families of distinction living in the town or its immediate neighbourhood. Now and then a concert at the Museum would unite these uncongenial elements; but, as a rule, each party kept pretty much to itself, the only outsiders who had free access to both being a certain number of privileged students, mostly belonging to the Prussian or Westphalian corps. Late hours were absolutely unknown; a *soirée*, with tea and the inevitable *kuchen*, from seven to eleven was considered the acme of dissipation; and the short distance between one house and another rendering the expense of a *droshke* unnecessary, the ladies, escorted by their cavaliers, and protected by hoods and goloshes, proceeded on foot to their destination in all the freedom of patriarchal simplicity.

The leaders of fashion in my time were a Scotch peer, whose principal occupation was to mount guard on Sundays over the plate in which the faithful of the English church deposited their offerings; and the resident director of the railway, or rather his wife, he being a good-natured nonentity, who ate liver sausage at seven, and indulged in surreptitious trips to Baden, with a view of studying the noble science of the *roulette*. Besides these, and a few really choice representatives of our native Albion, we had a German baroness and her sister, rich in family quarterings, but in nothing else; an ex-parliamentary presi-

dent, a celebrity in his way, who used to rehearse his speeches in the woods of the Kaiserstuhl; a retired officer of the French navy, disabled by gout; a Pole, famous for speaking no language, his own included, correctly; and a whilom secretary of Napoleon III, who had originally meditated a fortnight's stay at Heidelberg, and had remained there ever since. Add to them a sprinkling of officers on leave from Rastadt or Carlsruhe; a grave pedantic being called Doctor, but of what nobody knew; a good-looking couple, half-German, half-American, located in the neighbouring village of Handschuhsheim; and here and there a stray tourist outward or homeward bound, and you have, as far as my memory serves me, the *crème de la crème* of our little circle, as it flourished some eighteen or twenty years ago. If people didn't meet at each other's houses, they did at the theatre, the only public place of amusement more or less patronised by everyone; the balls at the Museum being almost exclusively frequented by the indigenous population, and the annual masked ball, organised on Shrove Tuesday by way of a wind-up to the Carnival, recruiting its chief lady supporters among the actresses of the local *troupe*.

During the three years of my sojourn, I witnessed the decline and fall of exactly as many managers; for, strange to say, the dramatic season, however promising its outset, invariably ended in a collapse. Of these worthies two were wandering administrators of the Crummles stamp (minus the Phenomenon), and the third a dancing-master, with more ambition than brains, who struggled on gamely as long as his funds held out, and then philosophically resumed his fiddle. The

prices of admission were moderate in the extreme, the usual cost of a subscriber's stall being elevenpence, and on grand occasions one-and-fourpence; performances took place regularly five times a week (including Sundays), from October to April, and during that interval every possible species of entertainment was by turns exhibited—opera, tragedy, comedy, drama, *possen* (musical farces), and even ballet, following each other in rapid succession. At a rough guess, I fancy I must have seen, in the course of my stay, from two to three hundred different pieces, better played on an average than is generally the case in provincial theatres, and in many instances reinforced by the engagement of such 'stars' as Emille Devrient, Haase, Döring, Marie Seebach, and Friederike Gossmann. Several members of the stock company have since attained considerable reputation on other boards; one of them, Fräulein Christ, having subsequently acquired a certain celebrity in Mosenthal's *Deborah* (our own Miss Bateman's *Leah*), and our favourite *ingénue*, Fräulein Marie Mathes (who died young), being still remembered among the brightest ornaments of the Court Theatre at Vienna. How on so small a stage such elaborate productions as Auber's *Muette*, Schiller's *Marie Stuart*, and even *Faust* (not Gounod's, but Goethe's), could be effectively given, I am at a loss to conceive, but so it was; and I particularly remember a very satisfactory representation of *Robert le Diable*, for the nuns' scene in which the entire ballet of the Darmstadt Opera had been specially engaged. To my constant attendance in this unpretending temple of the drama I am indebted for a tolerably extensive acquaintance with the works of the

best modern German playwrights, from Freitag to Nestroy, from Benedix to Kalisch and Kaiser; and consider myself therefore fully justified in including the evenings I passed there among my pleasantest and most profitable recollections of Heidelberg.

After the theatre came the *kneipe*, and its hour of social enjoyment and, natural consequence of our various nationalities, polyglot chat; while a neat-handed Phyllis, in the shape of the buxom Lise, distributed the foaming *schoppen*, placed before the ex-imperial secretary his supper, regularly transmitted from the Prinz Carl, and responded with a saucy smile to the compliments inspired by her bright eyes and dainty figure. Our first rendezvous had been at the Faulen Pelz, a tavern then much frequented by the students, the chief attractions being a remarkably handsome daughter of the proprietor, familiarly known as 'die schöne Thérèse,' and the noted excellence of the beer; the latter, however, gradually deteriorating in quality, and the fair Thérèse having vanished, no one knew whither, we migrated by common consent to the *brasserie* Dittenei in the Hauptstrasse, and made it our head-quarters during the remainder of my stay. A few minutes before eleven, except on certain festive occasions when an hour's grace was accorded, we were reminded by the appearance of two green-coated police officials that closing time was approaching. This was the signal for a general break-up; hats, greatcoats, and sticks were hastily collected; and ere we, together with the other guests, had accomplished a dozen yards of our homeward walk, the door of the *kneipe* was fast bolted and barred, the Polizei-Director's myrmidons, satisfied that all was

en règle, had retired, and Herr Dittenei, like the monarch of nursery-rhyme notoriety, was pleasantly engaged in 'counting out his money.'

Since time immemorial, Heidelberg has been, to a greater extent perhaps than any other town of its size in Germany, the chosen resort of notabilities in every branch of science and polite learning; and at the period I allude to it had certainly not degenerated in this respect from its ancient reputation, counting as it did among its residents such European celebrities as Mittelmaier, Chelius, Helmholtz (then a young man and recently married), and the eminent professor of chemistry, Bunsen. Nor, in the lighter specialties of authorship, was our own country altogether unrepresented. William and Mary Howitt had left before my arrival; but Mrs. Gaskell paid us a flying visit of a few weeks; and it was almost impossible to traverse the Anlage at any hour of the day without coming across the indefatigable recorder of Byronic conversation, Captain Medwin.

But, notwithstanding its manifold intellectual resources, and the easy *pococurante* life we led there, I doubt whether these attractions alone would have induced us to linger on from month to month, from year to year, in the valley of the Neckar, had not the natural beauties of the place itself and its delightful environs conspired irresistibly to detain us. I, for my part, was never weary of admiring the endless varieties of picturesque scenery that met the eye in every direction, while exploring the wooded heights beyond the Klingenteich, perfumed in spring-time with innumerable lilies of the valley, so poetically called in Germany *maiblumen*, or flowers of May; the winding

paths leading to the Drachenhöhle, or the rocky solitude of the Felsenmeer. High above all, visible from many leagues round, stands the ancient König or Kaiserstuhl; and at its base the almost perpendicular 'Heaven's ladder,' with its rude stepping-stones piled one across the other, affords a treacherous and slippery footing to the adventurous pedestrian. Beneath it lies the castle garden, and on the left the *châlet* of the Molkenkur. You may wander for hours in the woods without meeting a human creature; now and then a startled deer, or a hare darting along the greensward of a secluded alley, may interrupt your meditations; but in other respects you are 'monarch of all you survey.' In my time—and doubtless it is so still—the worthy citizens eschewed the hills, and limited their exercise to a leisurely stroll in the Anlage, or on Sundays to a family invasion of the Restauration in the Schlossgarten; indeed, with the single exception of the expressident already mentioned, I hardly remember encountering a living soul in the course of my solitary rambles, barring an occasional stray peasant with a china-bowled pipe in his mouth, taking a short cut to his native village, or a travelling student with a knapsack on his shoulder.

Not less attractive are the shady lanes and the ever-varying glimpses of hill and dale on the

opposite bank of the Neckar; the Hirschgasse, time-honoured scene of student *paukerei*, the sequestered Philosophen Weg; and above all, that lovely sloping bit of grass-land, vying in hue with the emerald, and studded in early April with the crocus and anemone, the *engelswiese* or angel's meadow. Beneath it flows the river; far on the left lie the village and woods of Ziegelhausen; on the right are the fertile plains extending to Mannheim and Spire, the garden of Southern Germany; and immediately before it, with its magnificent background of forest verdure, towers that most majestic of all ruins, the pride and glory of Heidelberg, the castle.

'Dien, que c'est beau!' exclaimed an enthusiastic Frenchman, for whose benefit I was enacting the part of cicerone, and who, in obedience to my strict injunctions, had refrained from turning his head until we had reached the middle of the bridge. 'Quel décor pour un cinquième acte!' he added, after a moment's reflection.

I feel confident that had my friend been a dramatist or a scene-painter, the Castle of Heidelberg would ere this have figured as a marvel of stage decoration at the Ambigu or Porte Saint Martin; unfortunately, as he happened to be neither, his eminently practical idea remains as yet unrealised.

C. H.

FORTUNES MADE IN BUSINESS.

VIII.

THE FAIRBAIRNS.

CARLYLE describes man as being physically the feeblest of bipeds, but by the aid of tools a giant. 'Without tools he is nothing, with tools he is all,' says the philosopher: with tools 'the granite mountains melt into light dust before him; he kneads glowing iron as if it were soft paste; seas are his smooth highway, winds and fire his unvarying steeds.' Man's power over the forces of Nature has, indeed, been wondrously strengthened during the last hundred years, a period which may be regarded as preëminently the era of invention. The introduction of steam as a motive-power opened up a vast and attractive region for inventive activity, and it is in this sphere of labour that many of the master-minds of these later days have been most successfully employed. Year by year the number and diversity of machines have increased, and steam, in obedience to man's control, has exerted its might upon them. Machinery—which, after all, is but the embodiment of intellectual force—has been the great reorganising power of modern times, and its originators have been amongst the principal agencies in the achievement of England's manufacturing supremacy. Inventive genius has, from the time when Watt surprised the world with the result of his broodings over the tea-kettle, been fully alive to the importance of steam, and has not neglected to avail itself of the splendid opportunities which the

invincible vapour has revealed. To this potent influence we owe a succession of mechanical triumphs such as the world never dreamed of before the steam era set in.

By a geological accident the northern counties of England have been able largely to monopolise the skill of the inventor of machinery. Those counties, with their rich and extensive beds of coals, their valuable ores, and their convenient streams, have naturally been the chief centres of operation for the industrious workers who have toiled to bring steam into subjection, and it is in those counties, midst the clang of hammers and the whirr of wheels, that the mighty workshops, where the pliant metals are manipulated and wrought into machines, are mostly to be found. Newcastle, Manchester, and Leeds—the capitals, as it were, of three of the more important of the northern districts of industry—have each produced, or given scope for the employment of, men of high inventive attainments and great energy and individuality of character. Prominent amongst these skilful and persevering pioneers have been the Fairbairns of Leeds and Manchester, who from the humblest beginnings have advanced themselves to positions of affluence and honour.

Towards the close of the last century, there lived in the picturesque town of Kelso, in Roxburghshire, a poor family, the head

of which was Andrew Fairbairn, a farm-labourer, whose quiet, thoughtful, and industrious habits won him the respect and esteem of his neighbours. Andrew Fairbairn had rather a numerous family to bring up, but very small means; he worked hard, however, in his rustic vocation, and was happy in having children of exceptional energy and originality of mind. His eldest son, William, was born in 1787; his youngest son, Peter, was born in 1799. Both sons rose to eminence as mechanical engineers; the former having a baronetcy conferred upon him, and the latter, as well as his eldest son, receiving the honour of knighthood.

It will be interesting to trace how the farmer's sons came to drift into those mechanical pursuits which they were so well qualified to follow, and which contrasted so strongly to the rural experiences of their early days; and it will be interesting also to note how completely they mastered every obstacle that beset them, and came ultimately to make a powerful and distinctive impression upon the industrial activity of the time. In this paper we must deal not only with the history of the Fairbairns of Leeds, but at the same time give a brief outline of the distinguished career of the Manchester Fairbairns, the life-stories of the two branches of the family touching and intermingling at so many points. Members of the same family, engaged in the same industrial labours, their histories are not only linked together by strong personal ties, but are part and parcel of the record of the mechanical progress of the century. Their influence has been indelibly impressed upon the localities which had the good fortune to command the concentration of

their energies and genius, and Manchester and Leeds have not been slow to acknowledge the work which the Fairbairns have accomplished.

EARLY STRUGGLES.

Neither William nor Peter Fairbairn had the privilege of receiving any particular educational training in their younger days. William, whose first years were passed at the village of Smailholm, a few miles west of Kelso, had for his first schoolmaster an old man whose physical infirmities procured him the name of 'Bowed Johnnie Ker,' from whom he learned more of the art of singing than of the ordinary rudiments of knowledge. Subsequently William was removed to the parish school, presided over by a Mr. White, and under this gentleman's supervision the young scholar was put through a course of study which was as little calculated to chime in with the true bent of his mind as the singing-lessons of 'Bowed Johnnie Ker' had been. Mr. White, instead of endeavouring to inculcate a really solid basis of education, lured the boy into the attractive region of Scottish poetry and romance; and so it happened that, at the age of ten years, William Fairbairn, beyond a knowledge of reading and the first few rules of arithmetic, knew very little.

In September 1799 Peter Fairbairn was born, and in the following month the family found it necessary to remove to Moy, in Ross-shire, where Andrew Fairbairn had taken a farm some three hundred acres in extent. Moy was two hundred miles distant from Kelso, and the journey had to be done in a covered cart. The farm turned out to be a great disappointment; it was little better than moorland, and there was

no house ready for the farmer's reception. At the end of the long and dreary journey, therefore, 'Andrew Fairbairn, with his wife and five children, had to take temporary refuge in a miserable hovel, very unlike the comfortable house which they had quitted at Kelso.*

For upwards of two years the Fairbairns struggled with this wild and rugged farm, and in 1801 gave it up, Andrew Fairbairn obtaining a situation as steward to Mackenzie of Allengrange, with whom he stayed two years. In the days of toil and privation at Moy, the boys had not been sent to school, but had been kept at work on the farm or in the house. It devolved upon William to have to nurse his younger brother Peter, who was then a rather weakly child; and it was while employed in this domestic capacity that he invented his first labour-saving machine,—a little wagon in which he used to wheel his brother about.

After leaving the service of Mackenzie of Allengrange, Andrew Fairbairn took his family to their old home at Kelso, and ventured southward alone, engaging himself to Sir William Ingleby of Ripley, Yorkshire, as farm-manager. Things did not go well at Ripley, however; and after a few months, Andrew Fairbairn left the baronet's service, and accepted the management of the Percy Main Colliery's farm, near Newcastle. His wife and family removed from Kelso and joined him, and the prospect seemed somewhat brighter for them. Peter was placed at school, and William was sent to work at the colliery; and in the midst of trials and hardships the two lads learned those lessons of self-reliance and independence which, as the years

advanced, raised them to important positions. At sixteen William was articled to the owners of Percy Main as an engineer apprentice; and it was while serving in that capacity that he made the acquaintance of George Stephenson, at that time employed as brakesman at Willington Quay. These two young men, destined afterwards to become famous amongst English engineers, helped each other both in their work and their studies, and a bond of friendship was thus created between them which lasted through life.

Peter Fairbairn was not more fortunate than his brother in respect of educational instruction. At the age of eleven years he was sent to work at the colliery. This was in the year 1811. In the same year, William concluded his five years' apprenticeship, and went out into the world in search of fresh work and experience.

SIR WILLIAM FAIRBAIRN.

William Fairbairn was twenty-one years of age when he quitted the Percy Main Colliery. For a few weeks he remained in Newcastle, assisting in the erection of a sawmill. He then removed to Bedlington, where he found employment at an increased wage, and where he met Miss Mar, the young lady who five years later became his wife. After a six months' sojourn at Bedlington, however, he saw that his prospects as an engineer were not likely to be materially advanced unless he changed his sphere of action; so, bidding an affectionate adieu to Miss Mar, he started out, with little more than the traditional shilling in his pocket, bent upon courting Fortune in London. On the 11th December 1811 he and a fellow-adventurer shipped on board a Shields collier bound for the Thames, and a very rough

* Smiles's *Industrial Biography*.

time they had. They were the only passengers. The weather was so bad that the vessel was fourteen days in making the voyage, and when they anchored off Blackwall the ship was in a very damaged condition. The captain, who had been drunk during the greater part of the voyage, made himself friendly with the young engineer, and the two went ashore together at Blackwall, with the avowed object of finding the Coal Exchange. Unfortunately, the captain was in such a state of mental confusion that, instead of getting to the Coal Exchange, he drifted with his young friend into a Wapping public-house, where they remained until ten o'clock in the evening. On leaving this waterside hostelry the two lost each other. William Fairbairn now found himself alone by night in a quarter of the metropolis which, even at that day, did not bear a good reputation. He appealed to the first watchman he met to recommend him to a lodging, and was taken to a house in New Gravel-lane. That same night the house next to the one in which he had slept was the scene of a tragedy that sent a thrill of horror through the whole country, a tragedy which De Quincey, with matchless mastery of words, so powerfully depicted in one of his best-known essays. After this painful experience, William Fairbairn returned to the ship for his companion, and they started for the City in search of employment. The captain, it turned out, had been locked up in the watch-house all night.

Mr. Rennie, the well-known engineer, was at this time a large employer of labour; Waterloo Bridge was in progress, and many other important public works. To Mr. Rennie, therefore, the two young men presented themselves,

and he sent them to his foreman, with the request that they should be employed. But the trade-unionists were the masters of the situation, and Mr. Rennie's recommendation was of no avail unless the unionists could be assured of the wisdom of employing the young men. Mr. Fairbairn, referring many years afterwards to this stage of his career, said, 'I had no difficulty in finding employment; but before I could begin work I had to run the gauntlet of the trade-societies; and after dancing attendance for nearly six weeks, with very little money in my pocket, and having to "box Harry" all the time, I was ultimately declared illegitimate, and sent adrift to seek my fortune elsewhere.'

London had failed them; so, with light purses and heavy hearts, they set forth to tramp the country. It was winter-time, and the roads were heavy with slush and snow; but they walked bravely on, and after a journey of eight hours reached Hertford, a penny roll and a pint of ale each having constituted the whole of their fare. Tired as they were, and wet to the skin, they forthwith sought a millwright's shop, and asked for employment. The master was unable to give them work; but pitying their condition offered Fairbairn half-a-crown, which was respectfully declined. The two now went and rested in the churchyard, and Fairbairn's comrade had a good cry, and complained bitterly of the rejection of the half-crown, seeing their destitute condition. 'If the worst comes to the worst, we can 'list,' said Fairbairn; and with this consolation they turned into the town, and sought out some humble lodgings.

Next morning they made further inquiry, and were advised

to go to Cheshunt, where a millwright was erecting a wind-mill, and was said to be short of hands. On this job they were fortunate enough to obtain a fortnight's work; after which, with a united fund of three pounds, they returned to London.

On his second visit to London, William Fairbairn succeeded in obtaining employment. Grundy's Patent Ropery at Shadwell was the first place he worked at; after that he got engaged at Penn's large establishment at Greenwich, and occupied his leisure time in improving his knowledge and in making private experiments. It was while here that he constructed a sausage-chopping machine for a pork-butcher, an invention which brought him 33*l.*, and which was successfully worked. Soon after this, Mr. Fairbairn fell out of employment, and again betook himself to the country, starting in April 1813, with 7*l.* in his pocket, on an industrial tour through the southern and western counties and the coal and iron districts of South Wales. Arrived at Cardiff, and being still without prospect of work, he took ship for Dublin, which city he reached the possessor of threehalfpence. The day after landing, he obtained an engagement at the Phoenix Foundry, where for some months his inventive skill was exercised in the construction of nail-making machinery, which, however, was destined never to be used, the opposition of the Dublin unionists being powerful enough to prevent its being worked.

The young engineer now returned to England, and made his way to Manchester, where he settled down for the remainder of his life. For two years he worked for Mr. Adam Parkinson as a millwright, and by thrift and industry saved sufficient money to en-

able him to furnish a two-roomed cottage. When he had accomplished this, he asked the lady who five years before had won his heart to marry him; and in 1816 we find him and his young wife undertaking the duties of house-keeping in the little cottage before mentioned. Marriage spurred him on to more ambitious effort, and he began business on his own account, his first contract being for the erection of an iron conservatory. He now took Mr. James Lillie, a fellow-workman, into partnership; but for a time they had an up-hill struggle. In the first place, they received notice from a Birmingham firm that they would be proceeded against for infringement of patent if they went on with their project for building an iron conservatory on the principle intended. They therefore had to relinquish this first order, and look out for fresh ones. They hired a small shed at a rent of 12*s.* a week, and, setting up a lathe and engaging an Irishman to turn it, they felt themselves prepared to receive fresh orders. Success was slow in coming, and Lillie began to have gloomy forebodings. As a last resource it was resolved to try what could be done by personal solicitation amongst spinners and manufacturers, and Mr. Fairbairn went round and interviewed many of them. This led to the young millwrights being engaged by Messrs. Murray, the cotton-spinners, 'to renew with horizontal cross-shafts' the whole of the work by which their mule-spinning machinery was turned. Fairbairn and Lillie were almost frightened at the magnitude of this order; nevertheless they set steadily to work to execute it; and so well were their employers satisfied that Mr. Murray recommended the engineers to the firm of

MacConnel & Kennedy, who then had the largest cotton-spinning concern in the country. Messrs. MacConnel & Kennedy were about this time erecting a large new mill, and they intrusted Messrs. Fairbairn & Lillie with the important task of supplying the necessary engineering work, gearing, &c. Improvements of a valuable character were introduced by Mr. Fairbairn, whereby the construction of the driving-shafts and their connections was greatly simplified and lightened, giving increased speed and additional security. The firm of Fairbairn & Lillie had now a prosperous career before them; their reputation was made; orders came in faster than they could be executed; and larger premises and more extensive machinery had to be resorted to. Ten years after their start in business, Fairbairn & Lillie were amongst the foremost firms of mechanical engineers in the country. The improvements they effected had a wonderful influence on the development of our textile manufactures. Iron-work of every description came within the scope of Mr. Fairbairn's operations; his fame as a scientific mechanic extended far and near. His life was spent, indeed, in experiments connected with iron, and his numerous works on iron, engineering, and mill-work are of great value. He was one of the first to take up iron shipbuilding, and in 1835 he established large works at Millwall, where, in the course of some fourteen years, says Mr. Smiles, he built upwards of one hundred and twenty iron ships, some of them above 2000 tons burden. His invention of the riveting machine, the part he took in working out the details of the tubular bridge across the Menai Straits, his connection with

the British Association (first as one of the founders, and subsequently as president), and his wonderfully lucid and practical lectures on mill-work and engineering, served to keep him for many years prominently before the public. Few men were more highly esteemed for probity of character and intellectual activity. For fifteen years—from 1816 to 1831—the firm of Fairbairn & Lillie was continued with great success. In the latter year Lillie retired, and thenceforth Mr. Fairbairn carried on the business, which he extended in many directions, on his own account, and amassed a large fortune. Some years afterwards, Mr. Fairbairn's eldest son, the present Sir Thomas Fairbairn, was taken into partnership; and more recently the extensive business has been carried on by a limited liability company, the founder of the concern retaining the leading position therein until his death. William Fairbairn's later years were rendered illustrious by the many well-deserved honours which were showered upon him. In October 1869 he was created a baronet, and from the chief sovereigns of Europe he from time to time received those marks of respect and distinction which are reserved only for men of world-wide eminence. He was a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, a corresponding member of the National Institute of France, and of the Royal Academy of Turin. He died on the 18th of August 1874, and retained his intellectual vigour to the last.

SIR THOMAS FAIRBAIRN, BART.

The present possessor of the Fairbairn baronetcy was born at Manchester in 1823. He was connected with his father in many of his most important undertak-

ings, and rendered valuable aid in working out some of the great problems of mechanical science with which his firm had to grapple. Apart from this, Sir Thomas Fairbairn has also showed an individuality and a capacity which have won for him a distinct reputation. Art has always been an object of study and delight to him, his appreciation thereof having been fostered largely by a residence of some years in Italy. He has allied himself with several movements for the encouragement of art in England, and has strenuously advocated art-teaching in connection with our schools. He was one of the commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851, and was chairman of the Manchester Art Treasure Exhibition of 1857, a scheme which he was greatly instrumental in promoting. Her Majesty offered him the honour of knighthood when she visited Manchester in 1857, but he declined the dignity. He was chosen a commissioner for the Great Exhibition of 1862, and sensibly assisted the success of the undertaking by his practical knowledge and refined appreciation of machinery and art. He has also employed much of his leisure time in discussing in the columns of the *Times* and elsewhere some of those knotty questions which are the means of bringing capital and labour into such frequent conflict. Trade-unionism, social progress, and kindred subjects have often formed the themes of well-written and ably-argued letters which Sir Thomas Fairbairn has contributed to the leading journal under the signature of 'Amicus.' In 1870, Sir Thomas Fairbairn was High-Sheriff of Hampshire, in which county he had a residence; and for his native county of Lancashire, as well as for Hampshire, he is a magistrate and Deputy-Lieutenant.

SIR PETER FAIRBAIRN.

We will now follow more closely the career of Peter Fairbairn. Peter continued to work at the colliery for three years, earning his bread in the best way he could, and devoting his spare time to the attainment of knowledge. At the age of fourteen he was apprenticed by his father to Mr. John Casson, a millwright and engineer at Newcastle, and the lad began to feel that his life had been directed to a worthy purpose. He gave his mind up steadily to the acquirement of a full knowledge of his trade, and was regarded by his shopmates as a successful and promising workman. Diligent, assiduous, and intelligent, possessing a strong affection for his work, and applying himself early and late to his duties, he made rapid strides in his profession, gaining the confidence and esteem of his employers, and, what is often most difficult of all to secure, the respect and goodwill of his fellow-workmen. In his later years Sir Peter Fairbairn frequently referred with pride to his early experiences at Newcastle, when he used to trudge, willingly and cheerfully, morning and night, between the farmhouse at Percy Main and the millwright's shop in Newcastle; and the breakfast-can which he always carried with him on those journeys was preserved by him as a precious relic, and kept bright and clean in the kitchen of Woodsley House in the height of his prosperity.

Peter Fairbairn was fortunate enough to fall in with Mr. Holdsworth, a mechanic and maker of cotton machinery, of Glasgow, while with Mr. Casson; and Mr. Holdsworth being in want of a foreman, it was arranged that Peter should fill the vacancy.

This was a period when the industrial arts were rapidly developing, and afforded good opportunities for really skilful and diligent men like Peter Fairbairn. Mr. Holdsworth saw that young Fairbairn was possessed of 'grit' and energy, and it was not long before he promoted Peter to the post of traveller to the firm, in which duty he had to move about amongst the principal towns in the United Kingdom, and occasionally had to make journeys to the Continent. The experience he thus gained was invaluable to him in after years. He was brought into contact with the leading mechanics and manufacturers of the day, and was enabled to see, more clearly than he otherwise could, in what particular channels the tide of industrial progress was turning. This was the time when the country was just settling down to peaceful pursuits, after the long and arduous struggle on the battlefields of Europe against the power of Napoleon.

In the year 1821, Peter Fairbairn considered it to his advantage to quit the service of Mr. Holdsworth, so he engaged himself, in the now rapidly expanding business of his brother William, at Manchester. For a few months Peter worked as a journeyman in his brother's machine-shop, gaining while there—short as his stay was—much useful experience. He then took it into his head to try his luck in London; and thither he accordingly went, and obtained an engagement with Mr. Rennie, the celebrated engineer, who was then in the height of his fame and in the last year of his successful life. The many important government contracts which Mr. Rennie had then in hand, and upon which Peter Fairbairn was variously employed,

must have brought the young millwright a considerable accession of knowledge.

As yet, however, Peter Fairbairn was something of a 'rolling stone;' his mind was active and restless, the object that was to focus it into settled directness of purpose was undiscovered. In 1822, therefore, we find him venturing to France in search of improvement, procuring employment first with Mr. Manby at Charonton, and subsequently with Messrs. Atkins & Steele, who were directors of an engineering concern situated near the present Pont d'Austerlitz. Peter Fairbairn remained about a year in France on this occasion, acquiring not only additional experience in his trade, but a fair knowledge of French industrial pursuits.

In 1823 he returned to England, and once more entered the service of his brother William at Manchester. Messrs. Fairbairn & Lillie were now in a large way of business. Peter Fairbairn held a position of responsibility in their works for about a year, at the end of which time the old firm of Messrs. Holdsworth & Co. of Glasgow offered him a partnership, which he accepted, and in 1824 he once again settled down in the city on the Clyde. His first partnership, however, does not seem to have been altogether in accord with his desires; he found himself in a great measure restricted in his operations—in fact, his partners would not move fast enough for him. Their works were called the Anderston Foundry. For four years he struggled for success, and then, when he saw that his best efforts were likely to be frustrated by antagonistic influences, he quietly retired from such an unsatisfactory field of operation, and cast about for something more suitable. He felt that his period

of 'Wanderschaft' was passed, the 'rolling-stone' stage of his existence had come to an end, and he longed to create a business of his own in some favourable locality. He consulted with his brother William as to what should be the next step in his industrial career, and the conclusion the two brothers came to was that the best thing for Peter to do would be to start business in Leeds as a machine-maker. This was therefore resolved upon; and in 1828 Peter Fairbairn, in the full strength of his manhood, with experience, skill, and energy as his sole capital and stock-in-trade, took up his abode in the town which henceforth to the end of his days was to be his home. The Glasgow partnership had left him in debt some 500*l.*, to discharge which his brother William lent him the money.

Leeds was at that time in the first flush of its manufacturing prosperity. More than thirty years before, another mechanical genius, Matthew Murray of Stockton, had entered Leeds in search of work, having travelled on foot from Stockton with a bundle on his back, without sufficient money when he landed to pay for a bed at the Bay Horse Inn, where he put up. Murray, first as mechanic in the flax-manufacturing establishment of Mr. Marshall, and afterwards in partnership with Messrs. Fenton & Wood as engineers, may be said to have originated the Leeds machine-making trade. Leeds has been fully alive to the importance of Watt's great invention; and at the time when Messrs. Murray, Fenton, & Wood's machine works were established at Holbeck (1795), there existed several factories for the spinning and weaving of flax, as well as for the performance of the several processes connected with

the woollen manufacture; and the Marshalls, the Gotts, the Wormalds, and others, who owned those factories, did much to promote the industrial advancement of Leeds in those early days of steam working. Arthur Young (the record of whose peregrinations at home and abroad it is so interesting to refer to at this distance of time) mentions that when he was at Leeds in 1796 there were six or seven steam-engines used in woollen mills and one in a drying-house, and that the machines which had done so much for the cotton trade were being rapidly introduced into Leeds. Of the flax trade he does not appear to have taken any particular notice; he probably mixed it up in his mind with the woollen trade. In 1791 there had been a flax-mill built at Holbeck, one of Savery's steam-engines, in combination with a water-wheel, supplying the motive-power. In 1792 one of Boulton & Watt's steam-engines had been substituted, of twenty-eight horse-power, and in 1793 there were 900 flax-spindles at work. Matthew Murray had a great influence in extending the industrial prosperity of Leeds; he not only was the means of giving the machine trade a firm footing in the town, but so improved the steam-engine itself as to excite the jealousy and alarm of Boulton & Watt, who were driven to adopt the not very generous plan of buying up ground adjoining Murray & Co.'s works with the view of preventing their extension. Further than this, it was due to Murray that Leeds had the honour of being the first place where a locomotive was put into operation on any railway. Murray, in conjunction with Mr. Blenkinsop, had improved Trevethick's locomotive, and the people of Leeds were privileged to see this new

machine dragging trains of coal-wagons between Leeds and the Middleton collieries, a distance of some three and half miles, several years before George Stephenson had brought his experiments in this direction to a successful result.

The quarter of a century which preceded the period of Peter Fairbairn's settlement in Leeds had, indeed, seen a marvellous growth of industrial enterprise in the town. It was in Leeds that Girard, the French inventor of flax-spinning machinery, who had been unable to get his invention applied in his own country, succeeded in reaping the first reward of his ingenuity in 1816. Leeds was ready to help forward any man of real inventive ability; Leeds, therefore, was the best place that a man of Peter Fairbairn's mechanical skill could have selected as a field of enterprise. It had suffered severely in many ways—from trade disturbances (engendered by unreasoning prejudice) and depressions (in which the whole country shared); but, in spite of all, had gone on steadily developing its commercial resources, being fully abreast with the march of inventive progress, and ready to avail itself of every aid to manufacture that ingenuity could devise. At the beginning of the century, Leeds had a population of 53,162 inhabitants; when Peter Fairbairn came into it, in 1828, the population had been at least doubled; while it has to-day a population of more than 300,000.

The part that the Fairbairns have played in helping forward this wonderful development is not difficult to trace. Peter Fairbairn looked around him thoughtfully and shrewdly before he decided upon the precise thing to do in Leeds. Stephenson's 'Rocket' had still to be ushered before the public;

and the great railway era, which was destined to change the aspect of affairs so marvellously, had yet to dawn. But there was an ample field of labour open for him notwithstanding. Flax-spinning machinery had engaged a good deal of his attention, and he came to Leeds with an improvement which he was anxious to introduce into this class of machinery. He proposed to use eighty spindles instead of forty, and to substitute screws for the old 'fallers' and 'gills'; thus not only simplifying the process very much, but achieving a great saving of waste in the raw material. The improvement would also considerably increase the speed and power of production.

While revolving in his mind how he had best proceed in order to get his invention into proper notice, he came across a young Glasgow workman named John Anderson, whom he had known during his connection with Messrs. Holdsworth & Co., and he induced Anderson to join him in perfecting the machine. He took a small back room in Lady-lane; and in that circumscribed space—he working as designer, Anderson as modeller, and a stalwart Irishman named Barney Calvert as lathe-turner and 'man about'—he set to work, with characteristic pluck and energy, to the completion of his machine. Peter Fairbairn laboured hard, and lived with enforced frugality during this anxious time. He lodged at the Shoulder-of-Mutton Inn in Marsh-lane; and often, after the usual day's work had been done in the back workshop in Lady-lane, would sit up until three or four o'clock in the morning working at his treasured models.

At length he finished his model machine, and sought an introduction to Mr. Marshall, to whom he

explained his various flax-spinning improvements. Mr. Marshall thought so favourably of the young engineer's invention, that he ordered him to begin the manufacture of the new machine forthwith, promising to replace his old machines with them as fast as they could be made. 'It will be impossible for me to do that without assistance,' said the inventor frankly; 'for I have neither workshop nor money.' 'Never mind that,' said Mr. Marshall: 'the Wellington Foundry at the New-road end is to let; go and take it at once—I'll see that you're all right.'

Elated by this encouragement, Peter Fairbairn lost no time in following the advice given by his new patron, and was soon installed, with his models and machines, in the Wellington Foundry, which at that time was but an extremely humble and unpretentious establishment. In this quiet way was founded the giant concern which to-day covers some seven or eight acres of ground, and finds employment for from 2000 to 3000 workpeople.

From the time of his entering upon the tenancy of the Wellington Foundry, Peter Fairbairn's progress was rapid in the extreme. For a while Barney Calvert had to go to Mr. Marshall's counting-house at the end of every week for the money wherewith to pay the wages of the handful of mechanics employed; but this condition of dependence did not endure long, the establishment prospered so well that the proprietor was soon in a position to run alone. Orders poured in upon Peter Fairbairn fast, and each new improvement that he introduced secured him an accession of customers. He applied himself to the making of woollen as well as of flax machinery, and was successful with

both. He is generally credited with being the first to substitute iron for wood in the construction of woollen machinery. It is not too much to say that by his achievements in the way of simplifying the mechanical processes in connection with the manufacture of flax, he gave great impetus to the trade, and was largely instrumental in preserving to Leeds its supremacy in this branch of the industrial arts.

While Peter Fairbairn was steadfastly employing his energy and skill in the perfecting of the machinery used in the Leeds manufactures, his fellow-workers in the field of mechanical invention were not less busy in their own special departments. It was, indeed, a period of intense application and remarkable activity. The spirit of invention was manifesting its presence everywhere; and never a year passed without the discovery of some important new force or development in mechanical appliances. But a few years before, Horrocks had perfected the power-loom; and at this time these new machines, whose introduction into the West Riding had led to riots and disturbances, were becoming firmly established. Jacquard had succeeded in getting his loom for weaving figured goods into use in England. Neilson had just invented the hot-blast, which Sir William Fairbairn described as having 'effected an entire revolution in the iron industry of Great Britain.' Clements had lately completed the invention of the planing machine, the germ of which may be said to have been discovered and put into practical use ten years before by Murray of Leeds. Three years previously Roberts had invented the self-acting mule, which was the means of working a signal improvement in cotton-spinning.

And while all these men of genius were devoting their intellects and strength to the elucidation of the yet unrevealed mysteries of mechanical science, George Stephenson was giving his soul to the accomplishment of the mightiest task of all—the practical application of the principles of the locomotive. In 1829 the locomotive was an established fact, and the era of railways may be said to have been successfully inaugurated.

With all these agencies in active operation around him, with the ability to shape his own labours so as to harmonise therewith, and with a keen appreciation of mechanical inventions of every kind, it is not surprising that Peter Fairbairn should have succeeded in making his mark upon the industrial progress of his time. It was not his good fortune to have his name associated with any one invention of such preëminent usefulness as to elevate his name into companionship with the names of our *greatest* inventors; nevertheless he possessed the true inventive genius, and as an improver of machines, if not as an originator, he attained well-deserved celebrity. He effected a very serviceable improvement in the roving frame; and he and Mr. Henry Holdsworth, working together, adapted what is known as the 'differential motion' to that machine, thereby greatly extending its power and simplifying its action. He likewise worked the 'screw gill' motion to the point of success, and introduced the 'rotary gill,' which has been proved to be of so much advantage in the manufacture of tow. The improvements thus effected were a great accession to the productive power of the Leeds flax and woollen machinery, and very materially reduced the cost of ma-

nipulation. He invented valuable machines for preparing and spinning silk-waste, and was successful in the introduction of improvements in machinery for the making of rope-yarn.

Meanwhile the metal trades of Leeds were expanding in many ways. The facilities which the command of coal and iron afforded them were not neglected. There were the extensive iron-works known as Kirkstall Forge, almost under the shadow of Kirkstall's abbey-ruins; the Bowling and Low-Moor Foundries; and the Farnley Iron-works, all ready to yield their metalliferous treasures up to the makers of machines. Foundries and machine-shops increased at a marvellous rate.

Mr. Kitson established the first foundry in Leeds for the making of locomotives in 1836. He had previously had some experience in constructing railway material at Hunslet; but in the year mentioned, in the lower room of an old cloth-mill, where a pair of woollen looms were in operation, he began to build his first locomotive. Much curiosity was evinced in Mr. Kitson's work, and he was joked upon the fact that there was no doorway large enough for the egress of the engine. This was but a small detail, however; and when the locomotive was finished Mr. Kitson broke down a portion of the wall, and the engine was soon put upon its travels out in the open country. Orders for more locomotives came in; and before long the cloth-weavers were ejected from the mill, and Mr. Kitson entered into full possession of the building, and the Railway Foundry (which was subsequently merged in the larger Airedale Foundry) soon became one of the leading industrial establishments

of the town. The Airedale Foundry of to-day comprises about ten acres of ground, and is capable of turning out about eighty locomotives every year. Mr. Kitson was a worthy pioneer; he opened up a new and profitable mechanical business to Leeds; and in the course of time others followed in his footsteps, and locomotive building became an important trade. Messrs. Manning, Wardle, & Co. subsequently attained a position of eminence amongst Leeds locomotive makers; and the Monk Bridge Iron-works, carried on by Messrs. Frederick & James Kitson, sons of the originator of the Railway Foundry, supply large quantities of material for the construction of engines. In 1857 there were upwards of 4000 persons engaged in Leeds in the manufacture of stationary and locomotive engines and railway material; and the last twenty years have considerably extended the productive capacity of these branches of industry. Messrs. S. Lawson & Sons, Messrs. Tayler Brothers & Co., Messrs. Greenwood & Batley, and many others have all carried on important establishments in connection with machine or implement making; and latterly Messrs. Fowler & Co. have had extensive works in Leeds for the manufacture of steam-ploughs. In 1857, according to a paper read at the meeting of the British Association by Mr. James Kitson, there were about 11,000 hands employed in the iron trades in Leeds; and in 1871 (as stated in a parliamentary return obtained by Mr. Edward Baines, and referred to in Baines's *Yorkshire, Past and Present*) there were 15,000 persons employed in metal works in Leeds, of whom between 8000 and 9000 were engaged in iron mills, foundries, and machine-shops. There

were also between 600 and 700 persons engaged in the manufacture of nails and in brass-finishing, and 6629 in 'miscellaneous' articles of metal. Thus, from those small beginnings which we have noted in the time when Matthew Murray started his career in Leeds—beginnings which were materially helped forward by the mechanical skill, business sagacity, and untiring energy of Peter Fairbairn—there grew up a wealthy and influential industry which has made the fortunes of many, and been one of the main sources of the town's prosperity in modern times.

Peter Fairbairn continued for several years to devote himself to the making of flax and woollen machinery; but as time wore on he began to turn his attention more to the art of constructing engineering tools, and of late years Wellington Foundry has been very largely employed in this branch of machine making. On the breaking out of the Crimean war, his firm were requested by the Government to construct certain special tools to be used in the manufacture of implements of war; and since that time the Wellington Foundry has always been more or less engaged in turning out heavy work of this description. In the gun factories of Woolwich and Enfield may be seen in operation a variety of huge machines for cutting, twisting, boring, and tearing iron and steel, many of which machines are supplied by this firm. Machines for the manipulation of textiles are often very large; but machines for making machines are Brobdingnagian in comparison. Cannon-rifling machines, milling machines, boring machines, planing machines, and slotting machines are amongst the formidable mechanical contrivances which the

Fairbairns have now occupied themselves in constructing for many years; and a walk through their foundry of eight acres is enough to suggest to the uninitiated the age of mammoths, so forcibly do the machines seem to typify the strength, size, and power of things gigantic.

Having thus indicated the course of Peter Fairbairn's business life, we may briefly refer to the events which have marked his public and social career.

Peter Fairbairn, much as he loved business, did not believe in giving up his existence to it wholly; he had a deep sense of the responsibilities and duties of citizenship, and was adapted by nature and disposition for the enjoyments of social life. He was a genial companion and a most hearty laughers. No one was more inclined to hospitality, and no one had a better appreciation of a good story. Moreover, he was a man of strong individuality; he held the most decided opinions and convictions, and never hesitated to let people know what they were. The great feature of his character was his indomitable perseverance. Having once made up his mind to master or do anything, he never rested until he had attained his end. This tenacity of purpose he carried with him into every undertaking of his life, and was as firm of resolve in carrying out his public labours as in prosecuting his personal business enterprises. His sympathies were broad, however, and his judgment well balanced; so that he was rarely found bringing his strong spirit of determination to bear on the side of unfairness. His relations with his workpeople were of the most satisfactory description. During the fifty years which have elapsed since Peter Fairbairn took the Wellington

Foundry, there have only been two strikes there; one occurred in 1833, and the other in 1871, some years after Sir Peter's death. When the strike of 1833 took place, trade was in a critical condition. Mr. Fairbairn took up what he considered to be a just position, and from that standpoint he resolutely declined to recede. The men were as obstinate on their side, and the result was that the employer engaged a number of untrained hands, and set diligently to work to teach them the trade. This caused great dissatisfaction amongst the old hands, and they indulged in some revengeful outbursts, more than once attacking Mr. Fairbairn's house, which was then in Blundell-place, a row of houses immediately behind the New Infirmary. On one occasion the assailants broke the dining-room window to atoms, and a gun or pistol was fired into the house, the bullet passing between the present Sir Andrew Fairbairn and his elder sister, then but very young children, who were standing together in the room. Peter Fairbairn carried his point, however, and this was the only trade dispute in which he was engaged during the whole of his business career.

In 1827 he was married to Margaret, daughter of Mr. Robert Kennedy of Glasgow. One son and two daughters were the result of that marriage.

The Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 greatly enlarged the corporate system in Leeds, and in the following year Peter Fairbairn was elected to represent the West Ward of the borough in the augmented Town Council. He continued to hold a seat in the municipal body until 1842, when the demands made upon him by his rapidly increasing business were so great that he resigned his

office, paying the fine of 50*l*. In 1854 he was again prevailed upon to take part in municipal work, and was elected an alderman. From that time up to within a short period of his death he occupied a prominent position in the public mind of Leeds. He was appointed to the magistracy, and in 1857 was elected mayor, filling the post to the honour of the town and with credit to himself. It may be considered a handsome tribute to his worth and a strong mark of public esteem that he was elected to fill the mayoral office during the most distinguished year in the modern history of the town. It was while Peter Fairbairn was mayor that her Majesty the Queen and the late Prince Consort visited Leeds, for the purpose of opening the town-hall; and it was during the same year that the British Association held its meeting in Leeds. He did the honours of his high office nobly, his large-heartedness and public spirit doing much to accelerate the progress of the woollen metropolis. On the completion of the town-hall he presented for its adornment, at a cost of 1000*l*., a marble statue of the Queen, Mr. Noble being the sculptor. How royally the Queen and her illustrious consort, and the two Princesses who accompanied them, were entertained by the mayor is now a matter of history. He placed his mansion—Woodsley House—at the disposal of the royal party, and the distinguished guests resided there during their brief sojourn in Leeds in September 1858, the late Lord Derby being the minister in attendance. The *éclat* which attended the ceremonial of opening the town-hall was contributed to with princely munificence by the mayor; and it is not too much to say that his exertions during the two years

that he filled the office of chief magistrate gave a prestige to the town which it had never previously enjoyed. The dignity of knighthood, which was conferred upon him by his sovereign, had been well earned, and was for the rest of his life honourably upheld. After the inauguration of the town-hall, Sir Peter gave a banquet to the leading noblemen and gentlemen of the county, and through his influence the commercial and landed interests of the district were brought into closer union than they had ever been before. Sir Peter was a generous supporter of the arts and sciences, and the numerous local institutions for the promotion of knowledge had always in him a valuable patron. He was president of the Yorkshire Choral Union, and evinced a good deal of interest both in music and drama. The esteem in which he was held by his fellow-townsmen has been shown in many ways, but most notably perhaps by their subscribing the cost of a portrait of Sir Peter for the council-chamber of the town-hall—which portrait was painted by the late president of the Royal Academy—and by the erection, by public subscription, subsequently of a bronze statue of Sir Peter, the commission being executed by Mr. Noble.

Sir Peter Fairbairn retired from municipal life at the end of the second year of his mayoralty, in 1859; but up to the time of his death, which occurred on the 4th January 1861, he continued to take an active interest in the affairs of the town. He was buried on the 9th of the same month, in the family vault at Adel Church, an impressive public funeral being given to him. It only remains to be stated that Sir Peter's first wife, by whom he had the three children who sur-

vived him, died in 1843, and that in 1855 he was married to the lady who is now his widow, Rachel Anne, fourth daughter of the late R. W. Brandling. With this, the life story of Sir Peter Fairbairn may be regarded as complete.

In Sir Peter Fairbairn was combined the skill of the inventor with the tact and energy of the man of business, and with such a field of enterprise as Leeds opened to him, it is not to be wondered at that he succeeded in building up a great fortune, and establishing one of the largest industrial concerns in the North of England. He was quick of perception and clear-headed to a degree, and many a time could ill restrain his impatience when customers would expatiate on mechanical matters of which they were comparatively ignorant. Foreign spinners, especially Frenchmen, used to irritate him very much. They would for ever be theorising and suggesting improvements, when all the time they knew next to nothing of the real principles upon which the machines were worked. He mentioned this failing of foreigners once to one of his English friends in Belgium, and complained bitterly of the waste of time involved in discussing their crude ideas. 'O, you must let them have their palaver,' was the reply; 'and when they have had their say, you'll easily set them right.' A pleasant feature in Sir Peter's character was once brought out by an incident which occurred on a steamer on one of the American lakes, while he was travelling in the United States. Frederick Douglass, the negro anti-slavery orator, whom Sir Peter had met in England, was said to be on board; so the engineer went in search of him, and found that the negro had been banished from the

saloon, and compelled to take up his quarters in the barber's shop. Sir Peter protested to the steamboat authorities against this inhuman treatment of 'a man and a brother;' but his appeals were of no avail. He took his revenge by turning his back upon the representatives of Yankee snobbery in the saloon, and betook himself to the barber's shop; and as long as he remained on the steamer (a period of several hours) he was the friend and companion of the ostracised negro.

SIR ANDREW FAIRBAIRN.

It will be interesting at this point to say something of the gentleman who is now at the head of the business which was so successfully established by Sir Peter Fairbairn.

Sir Andrew Fairbairn, Sir Peter's only son, was born at Anderston, Glasgow, on the 5th March 1828, in a house overlooking the Clyde. When he was about five months old, his parents, as we have seen, removed to Leeds; and by the time the child was well out of his nurse's care, the Wellington Foundry had become a flourishing engineering concern, and it was evident that the son's early years would be passed free from such struggles and privations as had been the lot of the father during his juvenile days.

The Fairbairns had, for their first settled place of residence in Leeds, a small house in Cardigan-place, close to where the North-Eastern Railway viaduct now stands, and it was there that Sir Andrew's elder sister, Elizabeth, was born. The family removed to Blundell-place in 1833, and Sir Andrew's second sister was born there in the same year.

Sir Andrew was first sent to a small school kept by a Miss Hartley, who lived in a house near

St. George's Church. Thence he was removed to Mr. Duncan's school in St. James's-street, where the training was efficient if somewhat severe, the 'ruler' being a rather powerful corrective in Mr. Duncan's hands. The family about this time removed to 11 Park-square, the prosperity of the business at the New-road end more than justifying the improved place of residence.

In the spring of 1837, Sir Andrew, then only nine years of age, accompanied his mother and aunt abroad, on a visit to his uncle, Mr. Peter Kennedy, who had a mill at Feldkirch, Vorarelberg, in the Tyrol. They took his uncle's house at Manchester by the way, and thence travelled by coach to London, where they took steamer for Rotterdam. The impressions received on this first journey to a foreign country were such as to inspire the lad with a strong liking for continental life. The voyage up the Rhine was a thing never to be forgotten; it awakened the boy's mind to the beauties of Nature and the attractions of poetry and romance. At length, however, they reached their destination, which was not far from Lake Constance; and in this picturesque retreat, so different from all his past experience, young Andrew Fairbairn passed the whole of the summer, acquiring, during his stay, a smattering of the *patois* of the district. In the autumn, however, he was taken by his mother and uncle to Geneva, and left in charge of Professor Rodolphe Töpffer, who kept a *pension* on the Place St. Antoine. The house looked out on the Salève Mountains, and at the end of the promenade, which was the playground, there was then a beautiful view of the lake. A more attractive place for the uninterrupted

pursuit of scholastic studies, and the enjoyment of healthful recreation, it would have been difficult to have found. They had few holidays—a day at Christmas, two days at the beginning of the year, a half-holiday at Easter, and a whole holiday on Ascension-day, were the only times of relaxation allowed, except during the months of August and September, when all the pupils—or as many as did not go home for the vacation—took journeys on foot through different parts of Switzerland. These tours extended over from three to six weeks. Andrew Fairbairn's first experience of this kind was made in 1838, and he found it rather difficult work keeping up with the more practised pedestrians. They walked generally about twenty miles a day, and once, when they lost their way, they did considerably over thirty miles. For a boy of ten this was a long distance. The exercise, however, was a great advantage to him, and he had every reason in after years to be grateful to Professor Töpffer that a careful physical training formed part of his educational system.

Mr. Töpffer was originally intended for an artist; but his eyesight failing him, he eventually settled down as Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres at the University at Geneva. He was a brilliant sketcher and a well-known writer. He published an account of the yearly travels of his pupils, with illustrations by himself; and these have since been republished, and are appreciated all over the world, as *Les Voyages en Zigzag*. Andrew Fairbairn, who remained with Mr. Töpffer for five years, accompanied the Professor on four of his 'voyages en zigzag'—in 1838, 1840, 1841, and 1842, going, in the latter year, from Geneva to Venice and back.

While Andrew Fairbairn stayed at Geneva, the city was threatened by Louis Philippe for giving shelter to Louis Napoleon. Geneva prepared for war, and the scholars at Mr. Töpffer's *pension* anxiously awaited the coming of the French troops, feeling sure of a holiday as soon as the attack commenced. Eventually, however, the 'little war' was avoided, although matters had gone so far as to induce the Professor to hire a place of refuge away on the mountain-side, to fly to in case of necessity.

In 1839 Sir Andrew Fairbairn, while on his holidays in England, laid the foundation-stone of Woodsley House, and when he returned home in 1842 the mansion was completed and occupied. He was now sent to the High School at Glasgow, and lived with a Mr. d'Orsey, first at Patrick, and then in Bath-street, Glasgow. After being a couple of years at the High School, he attended lectures at Glasgow College, under Professors Ramsay, Lushington, and others. In the spring of 1846 he removed to Huntingdon to prepare for Cambridge. His tutor was the Rev. C. Ebdon. In October 1846 he began to reside at Christ's College, Cambridge; but finding that he was disqualified from trying for anything on account of his Scotch birth and parentage, he migrated to Peterhouse in January 1847. He eventually graduated in 1850, having amongst his contemporaries in the same year Mr. Childers and Mr. F. S. Powell, late M.P. for the Northern Division of the West Riding. He came out as 37th wrangler, and in 1853 took the degree of M.A.

On leaving Cambridge in 1850, Sir Andrew Fairbairn entered himself a student of the Inner Temple. He read for a year with Mr. Davidson, the conveyancer, and

afterwards with Mr. Kemplay, now Q.C. In 1852 he was called to the Bar, and joined the West Riding Sessions and Northern Circuit. Ceasing to practise in 1855, he made a short trip to America, visiting some of the principal cities of the States. He remained some time at Boston, and while there paid several visits to Harvard University, on one occasion being called upon to respond for Cambridge at the Harvard Commemoration dinner. In 1856 he went to Hanover, where he spent the winter studying German, and in the following year returned to Leeds and took to business.

Possessing the family instinct for industrial pursuits, he entered very heartily into the work which his father committed to his charge, and soon proved a valuable aid to the extension of the firm's connections. His educational training and knowledge of the world gave him considerable advantage in his subsequent dealings with spinners and manufacturers abroad, and year by year the productive capacity of the Wellington Foundry had to be enlarged. Sir Peter Fairbairn despatched his son in the first instance to Germany, where the firm had already many business friends; and Sir Andrew travelled over a great part of Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Prussia, acquiring, as he went on, a close acquaintance with the practical working of the flax mills of Germany. He subsequently made similar journeys to France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy, and in the two latter countries obtained an insight into the waste-silk spinning trade. In 1858 Sir Andrew made a business tour to Russia, going from Grimsby to Cronstadt; and after visiting Moscow, Narva, and other centres of trade, returned to England by way of Warsaw and Vienna.

In the intervals between these extended business tours Sir Andrew Fairbairn applied himself assiduously to the acquirement of a knowledge of the various branches of mechanical engineering, and in 1860 his father took him into partnership. In 1861 Sir Peter died, and Sir Andrew carried on the business alone until 1863, in which year he took into partnership his cousin, Mr. T. S. Kennedy, and Mr. J. W. Naylor, who had been in the works since he was a boy of fourteen or fifteen, and had risen through all the grades of the business. The firm has since then continued as Fairbairn, Kennedy, & Naylor, and the operations of the concern have increased even at a greater rate than in the time of the original founder.

In 1875 there were 2400 work-people employed at the Wellington Foundry; at Sir Peter Fairbairn's death in 1861 the number of hands engaged would be about a thousand. The work of mechanical invention has been diligently carried forward by Sir Peter Fairbairn's successors, who were amongst the most prominent of English exhibitors of machinery at the Paris Exhibition last year, and were awarded a gold medal. The firm exhibited a system of flax-spinning machinery, comprising a double hackling machine, a combing machine, spreader, drawings, roving, and spinning frames. The hackling machine was peculiar, having a self-acting motion, by which the flax in passing through the first machine was partially combed. In the process of passing from the first to the second machine, the clamp holding the flax was automatically loosened, the flax which was between the clamp was freed, and the clamp turned, so that the portion of flax which had been on

the top in the first machine and that which had been under the clamp were both combed by the second machine, or rather by the second half of the machine. These machines, which are very beautiful in construction, naturally attracted a good deal of attention while in the Exhibition.

We must now make some reference to the public life of the present head of this great engineering establishment. Sir Andrew Fairbairn has engaged more actively even than his father in the public affairs of Leeds, and has in many ways shown an earnest desire to assist his fellow-townsmen in promoting the welfare of the people.

In 1866, having previously been made an alderman of the borough, Sir Andrew Fairbairn was elected mayor, and so efficiently did he perform the civic duties that he was unanimously reelected in the ensuing year. The second year of his mayoral term proved to be an eventful one. In May 1868 a National Exhibition of Works of Art, on a very extensive scale, was to be opened in the New Infirmary, which had been built by Sir Gilbert Scott; and on that occasion Leeds was once more to be honoured by a royal visit. The Prince of Wales accepted the mayor's invitation to open the exhibition; and on the 19th May his Royal Highness entered Leeds from Temple Newsam (where he had stayed the previous night), and officiated at the important ceremonial of inauguration. During the ten years that had elapsed since the visit of her Majesty, Leeds had increased its population by 40,000. The mayor did the honours of the occasion to everybody's satisfaction, and in the month of August of the same year he received from the Queen a patent of knighthood.

About this time Sir Andrew Fairbairn began to turn his attention to political matters more closely than he had hitherto done, and was induced to resign the office of mayor and offer himself as a candidate for the representation of Leeds. He came out as an independent Liberal candidate, the other candidates being Mr. Edward Baines, Mr. Carter, Admiral Duncombe, and Mr. Wheelhouse. At the polling-day, however, Sir Andrew was unsuccessful.

On the formation of the Leeds Schoolboard in 1870, Sir Andrew Fairbairn was elected its first chairman, to which post he was twice reëlected, continuing in office until May 1878, when he resigned his seat on the board in consequence of having disagreed with the majority of the members on a question of expenditure, which Sir Andrew held to be excessive. In 1874, at the general election, Sir Andrew offered himself as a candidate for the representation of Knaresborough; but he was defeated by Mr. Basil T. Wodod. In 1876 Leeds had to find a successor to Mr. Carter, M.P., who resigned his seat, and Sir Andrew's name was once more brought forward; but ultimately he withdrew from the candidature rather than divide his party. At the present time he is one of the accepted Liberal candidates to be brought forward for the Eastern Division of the West Riding at the next election.

In 1877 Sir Andrew was appointed a member of the Royal Commission for the Paris Exhibition; and in watching after the special interests of Leeds, and securing as far as possible the efficient representation of its machinery and manufactures, displayed great zeal and energy. He was appointed to the Engineering

and Agricultural Committee, presided over by the Duke of Sutherland; and resided in Paris from the end of March to the end of June last year, working hard in the Exhibition, and being present at all the official *fêtes* and ceremonies. More than once Sir Andrew was invited to the French Foreign Office, presided over at that time by M. Waddington. The first time he had seen the Minister was, years before, when the latter was preparing to row with the Cambridge team in the University Boat-race on the Thames; the next time was when M. Waddington was the Foreign Minister of France.

It is in the industrial annals of this country, however, that the achievements of the Fairbairns will be principally remembered, although in regard to public honours they have, as we have seen, also been highly fortunate. It may be mentioned of Sir Andrew that, in addition to the various offices already alluded to as having been filled by him, he has been a major of the Leeds Rifle Corps, having begun duty as full private, and figured in the 'awkward squad' in company with the late Mr. George Beecroft, M.P. for Leeds. He was also a captain in the Yorkshire Hussars, but retired in 1877; and is on the Commission of the Peace for the West Riding and for Leeds. He was appointed a director of the Great Northern Railway Company in 1878. In 1862 Sir Andrew married Clara Frederica, daughter of Sir John Lambton Loraine, Bart.

The machine trade of Leeds is at the present moment, like most other English industries, in a state of depression. The productive power of the various foundries and machine shops, however, is greater than ever; and when the

tide of prosperity turns once more in their favour, the canopy of smoke will settle with all its old density over the woollen metropolis, and the furnaces will blaze, and the hammers and anvils will clang, with all their ancient force. It is marvellous to observe to what a position the iron industries of Leeds have risen in such a short space of time, yielding large and rapid fortunes to the leading men engaged in them, and almost elbowing the staple trade of the town into a condition of secondary importance. It is one of the traditions of the district that iron-works existed in Leeds and the neighbourhood in the time of the Roman occupation, and the monks of Kirkstall are credited with having added iron-working to their other pursuits; but it was not until the Murrays, the Fairbairns, the Kitsons, and other artificers in iron entered upon the scene that Leeds came properly under the rule of Vulcan. These men not only enriched themselves, but enriched the town, developing to the general profit of the community the valuable mineral resources of the district, and

giving the world the advantage of their many mechanical discoveries. It was never dreamed at the beginning of the present century that such a possibility of development existed within the boundaries of Ralph Thoresby's native town. There were in 1871 99 collieries existing in the Leeds district alone; the total number for Yorkshire being 423. In the same year there were in the Leeds and Bradford district 13 iron-foundries, containing 247 puddling furnaces, and 59 rolling mills. The great industrial activity and immense resources which these figures represent are in wonderful contrast to the picture which could be drawn of the condition of things half a century ago; and whether England is destined to retain its industrial preëminence or not, the history of the men who were mainly instrumental in building up the nation's industrial greatness will always remain amongst the most attractive and most instructive evidences of a progress that is as yet probably the mightiest achievement of human effort.

CLUB CAMEOS.

Agitation.

THE professional fanner of discontent has at the present day a wide and active career before him. Scarcely a question arises but is capable of bringing grist to his mill. No matter what be the course proposed by the calm and temperate mind for the solution of surrounding difficulties, the agitator is equal to the occasion, and can discover flaws in every scheme. In a country like England, where there is great wealth on the one side, and great poverty on the other,—where labour and capital, production and want, free-trade and restrictions are ever coming into collision,—it is not difficult for the man whose interest it is to sow the seeds of dissension to scatter them broadcast, and to watch the upgrowth of a goodly crop.

The agitator declines to be satisfied, and can turn the softest answer into bitterness. If we extend the suffrage, we are permitting an ignorant majority to overawe an educated minority. If we refuse to extend the suffrage, we are allowing a coterie to legislate for the nation, and ignoring the opinions of the masses. If we reduce the naval and military estimates, we are enfeebling our position as a great Power. If we increase the estimates, we are wantonly adding to the taxation of the country. If we take part in the affairs of foreign nations, we are guilty of officious interference. If we hold ourselves aloof, we are conscious of our insignificance. If we consent to arbitration, we are afraid to fight.

If we are prepared to maintain our demands by force, we are a blustering bully. If we add new laws to the statute-book, we are harassing the country by over-legislation. If we cease to legislate, we are indifferent to the existence of the grossest abuses. If we advise capital to modify its gains, we are being intimidated by the working classes. If we recommend labour to succumb, we are pandering to the extortions of a grinding plutocracy. Nothing that we do or suggest satisfies the agitator, whose object it is to fan the flames to heat himself.

Outside the realm of agitation the professional agitator has nothing, and has attained to no distinction. Discontent is the atmosphere he breathes, and he lives only by encouraging the passions and prejudices of his followers. He is indifferent to what cause he supports, provided he sees his way to bringing his name before the public, to becoming the agent of the special societies that have been created, and to being handsomely paid for his services. He may pose as the uncompromising defender of Protestant principles, flood the land with offensive literature, and incite mob-riots by the stimulating invective of his lectures. He may appear in the garb of a Ritualist, and derive a handsome annuity, thanks to the subscriptions of sympathisers, out of the prosecutions that have been instituted against him. He may stand forth as the fierce denunciator of the wrongs of the working man, and draw a comfortable salary

out of the penny contributions of the masses. If there is an explosion underground, he depicts the sufferings of the poor miner, and exposes the indifference of the Government to the welfare of the mining population. If a ship is lost at sea, he dilates upon the scoundrelism of ship-owners, who, provided they obtain their insurance, are careless as to the soundness of the craft they overload with cargo, or the safety of the crew they collect together. If there is a strike, he sides with the foes of the manufacturer, coal-owner, or agricultural employer. If men, notorious for their political offences, or for their fraudulent practices, are confined in gaol, he takes their part, speaks at indignation meetings, drives in a fly at Sunday processions, and is incessant in petitioning the Home Secretary. The aim of his mischievous existence is to be always talked about, to have his name always cropping up in newspapers, and to create, if not an anxiety, at least a curiosity, in the mind of the public as to his movements during seasons of crisis or excitement.

The goal that the professional agitator sets before him varies according to his talents, his position in life, and the notoriety he succeeds in obtaining. At the end of a few years, what with contributions, peculations, fees for lecturing, and the sale of pamphlets, he may be able to retire on his ill-gotten gains and quit the trade of agitation for ever. Or he may receive an income from his followers, have his political expenses paid, and enter Parliament. Or it may be the policy of Government to throw him a sop in the shape of petty office, and silence his barking. But whatever be the prizes of the seditious career that the professional agitator has chosen,

of one thing we may be assured, that no sooner has he received the reward that contents him, than he will utterly ignore in the future the advocacy of the cause that has borne him on its tide to success. Of what use is the orange when its contents have been well sucked? Job knew human nature well when he wrote, 'Doth the wild-ass bray when it hath grass?'

There is one man of my acquaintance who, when he finds his way into the Caravanserai, is generally to be seen in the political library poring over the pages of Hansard or the file of old newspapers, who on the whole has not found the profession of agitation either dull or unprosperous. There is no mistaking Bob Royston for other than he is. Who but a demagogue and the favourite tribune of the people would dare be seen, west of Charing Cross, wearing that low, broad-brimmed, conspirator's-looking hat, and with a huge, ill-folded, faded, green umbrella as a staff for his footsteps? Who but an agitator—one so absorbed in the miseries of the people as to be heedless of the *petits soins* of civilisation—would wear so rusty and shapeless a coat, so unbuttoned a waistcoat, such terribly curtailed inexpressibles, and such ragged and discoloured linen? Who but a democrat could knit his features into so severe a frown, and pass his hand through his long untidy locks with such an air of thought, menace, contempt, and ferocity? Who but the poor man's advocate could enter the club, and so savagely glare at the luxurious surroundings of the Caravanserai; at the newspapers stitched and carefully folded for perusal; at the oil-lamps giving a soft subdued light; at the sofas and easy-chairs, so suggestive of conversation, repose, or slumber; at the atten-

tive gentle-footed waiter, wearing the plush and stockings of servitude; at the hush and quiet of well-disciplined arrangements? He says, as plainly as face can speak without words, 'Ye Sybarites, ye pampered scions of a one-sided state of creation, why are ye revelling in luxury and in all the refinements of the most self-

ish civilisation, whilst yonder, outside these walls, are the bitterest misery, the most grinding poverty, the basest crime? Arouse ye out of your sloth, and come out and help us!' And who but the agitator, born to be obeyed by his followers, to be listened to with deference, and to be enveloped in the incense of homage and

flattery, could so bully the waiters who have to attend upon his orders—could so rudely crush conversation by the introduction of argument—could be so arrogant, offensive, and generally disagreeable?

There is in all that Royston does that charming suavity of the Republican who considers rudeness a proof of independence, and that good manners and servility neces-

sarily go hand in hand together. He talks in a loud voice, as if he were addressing a meeting; he snatches a newspaper from your knee without apology; he jostles you on one side as he enters the room; he breathes hard as he writes his letters; he opens the window when the wind is in the east; he disturbs the silence of the library by his snores, and the waiters dare not awake him; he eats

like a German, and drinks spirits and waterlike an exciseman. He is one of the most objectionable men in the club, yet neither the club nor the committee can turn him out. Ah, if clubs could only treat offensive persons as they do bankrupts, how much more pleasant those institutions would become! But, then, who are to decide as to the offensive people? We might have a club which would winnow its members till none were left.

Yet there was a time when Royston was deemed a good fellow, and no one who knew him in the days of his youth would have imagined that he would have developed into the turbulent truculent man he now is. At Winchester he was a popular captain of the school, and when he went up to New, his rooms, owing to his musical talents and the liberality of his festivities, were among the most frequented in the University. It was only when he quitted Oxford, and after several years passed in obscurity at the Bar, that he began to pose as the people's friend and the enemy of his own class. As so often happens to men who have attained to distinction or to notoriety, a purely accidental circumstance made him create the character he now plays with such success upon life's stage. How chance fashions the careers of men! Had Smeaton been articulated to an attorney, would the world ever have heard of him? Had Rousseau taken his seat at the paternal cobbler's stall, should we have had the *Confessions* and *Emile*? Had Hume gone into trade, would our literature have been enriched with his History? Had Turner remained a barber, would he have been handed down to posterity as the Shakespeare of English landscape-painters? Had Lord Eldon betaken himself to coals instead of to Coke upon

Littleton, would he ever have raised himself above the ruck of mankind? Had the great Thesiger remained in the navy, should we ever have heard of his name? And if Royston had not been engaged as counsel in a leading case, would he ever have achieved notoriety and developed into a mob-hero? Fortune in one of her freaks made him what he is, and transformed him from what he was.

There is no necessity to enter into the details of the famous trial which a few years ago was the talk of the country, and still occupies a prominent place among our *causes célèbres*. A Roman Catholic peer had succeeded in forcing his orphan niece, to whom he was guardian, to be converted from Protestantism, to place her fortune in his hands, and to enter a convent. The friends of the lady interfered, and, on discovering that the young woman had acted under severe pressure in alienating her property and in changing her religion, demanded her release, and the restoration of her estates. His lordship, however, denied the facts brought against him, and declined to return a single acre of what he was pleased to term 'the free and spontaneous gift of his niece.' The case came into court, and Royston held a brief as counsel for the young lady. As luck would have it, his leader became so gravely indisposed during the proceedings that almost the whole onus of the trial devolved upon the junior. Royston saw his opportunity, embraced it, and became famous. The case had all those elements which appeal to the passions and prejudices of the multitude. The oppressor was a peer, a man of wealth, and a Papist; the victim was a young and pretty woman, compelled to abjure her religion, and to be immured against her will in that ecclesiastical

prison, a convent. Fierce were the denunciations of Royston against the avarice and inutility of an aristocracy, against the inhumanity of the defendant, and the diabolical nature of the machinery of the Romish Church when it was once set in motion to crush a helpless victim ! With what keenness he cross-examined the Roman Catholic bishops and monsignors and lady-superiors and nuns that appeared in the witness-box, and how terrible was his invective when he commented upon their proceedings ! How eloquently he discoursed upon the virtues of the plaintiff, her miseries, her sufferings, and the tyranny of her protector, who had robbed her of her property, and alienated her from those of her religion !

The trial was eagerly watched by the public. All classes of society were interested in it, and the court was densely crowded throughout the proceedings. The newspapers took the matter up, and their columns were filled with verbatim reports of each day's doings. Seldom had a barrister such an opportunity, and Royston made the most of it. He was the idol of the hour, and both when he entered and took his departure from Westminster Hall he was vociferously cheered by an admiring crowd. When the verdict of the jury was given in favour of his fair client the enthusiasm of the mob knew no bounds ; they applauded in open court, they surrounded Royston as he entered his brougham, and if the police had not interfered they would have taken the two job-horses out and drawn the carriage themselves.

Before that memorable trial Royston was unknown ; after it not a hamlet in the country but was familiar with his name. Suddenly, without preparation, and almost in spite of himself,

the barrister had created a rôle which he felt henceforth he must always act. Before the trial he had been welcome in society ; he had, as a gentleman, lived amongst gentlemen, and he had entertained the views and sentiments of the class to which he, by birth, belonged. All was now changed. Carried away by the homage of the mob, he had, during the trial, identified himself with the people ; he had uttered sentiments which he knew would be popular with the crowd ; he had inveighed against the governing classes, against the inequality in the distribution of wealth, against the absorption of the land by a pleasure-seeking aristocracy, against the Romish Church, and much that he had said against the Church of Rome was applicable to the Church of England. Yet whilst indulging in these diatribes against the upper classes he had pandered to the vanity and the discontent of the mob, by applauding all their actions and sympathising with all their grievances.

There was now no alternative but for him to continue as he had begun. He had insulted society, and the polite world looked askant at him ; his former friends shunned him as a political mischief-maker ; save one or two very advanced Radicals, he was cut by all who had once known him. Indifferent to all slights, Royston threw in his lot with the most mischievous of the lower orders—with the men who will agitate, but who will not work. By these he was most cordially welcomed. He was on the committees of all their societies for the equalisation of mankind and the destruction of capital. In all their differences he was appointed their arbitrator. He was the favourite speaker at all their

meetings. A newspaper called the *Red Banner* was especially started to report his speeches, and to convey his opinions to the multitude. Whenever an agitation deputation—no matter what was the cause of the agitation—waited upon the Home Secretary or other Minister, Royston was the spokesman. The mob, whatever

be its faults, is seldom fickle in its loyalty to its own favourites; come weal or woe, through pleasure or persecution, in storm or sunshine, the fervent ignorant crowd declines to be laughed out of its sympathies, or to depose the idols it has once set up. Politicians, newspapers, reviews, priests, dandies, might sneer at

Royston, but his unwashed adherents never doubted his judgment or deserted his standard. In all strikes, lock-outs, and agricultural differences, his opinion was the first asked and the first followed.

The forensic career presents numerous phases of existence. There is the barrister who wins a name as a brilliant lawyer, who enters Parliament, who becomes

one of the law-advisers of the Crown, and who ends by gaining the great prizes of his profession. There is the barrister who, as the son of a solicitor or as the husband of the daughter of a solicitor, finds himself at once the master of a lucrative practice, and though he may never have been heard by the public outside, yet is not the least amongst the luminaries of his calling. There

is the barrister who, despairing of solicitors' visits, betakes himself to the cheaper but readier rewards of journalism. There is the barrister, generally the son of a retired tradesman, who is called to the Bar because he thinks it will give him the 'position of a gentleman.' There is the barrister, the heir to a good estate, who at-

taches himself to one of the Inns of Court, not with any intention of practising, but because a study of the law will be of service to him when he takes his seat amongst his brother magistrates. And there is the barrister who commands a large business in the lower walks of his profession, who is not held in much esteem by his fellows of

the long robe, and who has as much chance of obtaining 'silk' or of being raised to the bench as a bottle of Tarragon vinegar has of developing into '47 port.

To this last class belongs Bob Royston. One of the results of his appearing in the character of the people's friend, and of posing as the enemy of the privileged classes, was the gradually turning of his business from the civil

into the criminal channel. Many barristers have begun at the Old Bailey, and have ended as the most respectable of Westminster Hall. Royston has reversed the process. He made his name at Westminster, and he is now one of the pillars of the criminal law east of Temple Bar. In all cases where the proletariat have struggled against their masters, or rank or wealth has been

guilty of misconduct, he is engaged as counsel—in the first instance to defend the poor, in the second to expose the rich. Is a tenant of a small holding at war with his powerful landlord, the Agricultural Union comes to the defence, and Royston enters the arena of justice as the peasant's friend. Is a sailor unjustly treated by his captain on a long voyage, Royston is just the man to deal with the case, and to attribute all the blame to the commander and none to the hand. Is labour fighting against the compromises of capital, Royston is the upholder of trades-unionism, and bids the working man not yield a jot of his demands. Is the directorate of a bank accused of defrauding its shareholders and of robbing the widow and the fatherless, who more severe against a grasping and unscrupulous plutocracy than Royston? Has a wild Irishman been imprisoned for treasonable practices, who can better defend him than the turbulent demagogue? In all election disputes, how scathing are the comments of Royston upon the bribery and corruption practised by the rich! To hear him, one would think that honour, virtue, patriotism, and fair dealing were only on the side of the lower orders.

Royston is an excellent type of the Old Bailey lawyer of the last generation. He has a power of coarse eloquence; a bullying manner of cross-examination; a loud overbearing voice; a face capable of all the expressions of scorn, hate, contempt, and ridicule, which would have made him the bosom-friend of Judge Jeffreys. Witnesses have fainted in the box at the mere look of the man. Judges stand somewhat in awe of him, and dislike differing from him or

interrupting him. Jurymen have been days before the sounds of his grating boisterous voice have ceased to buzz in their ears. The fellow knows his power, and does not scruple to use it. Fear him, and he will domineer over you to the last; but brave his furious glances, meet him as he meets you, show him that you are not to be intimidated, and he will cringe and fawn and be as submissive as a whipped hound. Still it must be admitted that it is only the few who are prepared to oppose him. It is not given to everybody to possess the peculiar qualities which subdue the bully, though no man yields sooner than he.

The aim of Royston, like that of most men who live by agitation, is to enter Parliament; but as yet he has been uniformly unsuccessful. In spite of the eulogiums of his newspapers, of the efforts of his itinerant lecturers, and of his obtruding himself, whenever an occasion offers, as the working man's candidate, he has never yet headed the poll. Why he should have been so systematically rejected, it is difficult for me to understand. He is the friend of the working man; the working man pays all his election expenses; the working man quotes him as an infallible authority; the working man adds largely to the agitator's income by paying him to serve on committees and to look after his interests; yet Royston has stood for boroughs where the votes of the working classes should have carried the day, and has not been elected. His political principles are elastic enough for any shire or borough in the country. He is an independent Liberal, or, in other words, independent of his party when it declines to do anything for him, but dependent enough when he fancies he perceives rewards in the distance.

It is amusing to watch Royston shift and veer and trim his sails to catch every breeze that blows from high quarters, when he thinks he has the chance of being appointed a judge of county courts, or of conquering the prejudices of the Lord Chancellor against admitting him within the bar. Royston is a very clever man, well read in law, and enjoys the reputation, among certain classes, of being a sound Protestant, a great philanthropist, and a perfect Cato where loyalty to his principles is concerned; yet I should be very sorry to place much faith in his honour or integrity where a conflict had to ensue between his principles and

his interests. The latter, I think, would win easily, and there would be little market for the former. Still, profession is a great thing. People are too indolent or too timid to judge for themselves, and to have the courage of their opinions; and so, what a man calls himself, the world generally ends by accepting and acknowledging. Royston is the working man's friend, though it seems to me, considering the amount of business the workingman brings to Royston, the name is somewhat of a misnomer; it is the working man who is the friend of the agitator, not the agitator who is the friend of the working man.

TEN DAYS AT ST. MORITZ.

EVERY one has at some time or other experienced the very disagreeable sensation of being roughly roused from a heavy sleep. The sensations experienced are generally the same. First the feeling of deadly anger at the interruption; then the half-reasoning wonder, the total ignorance of our whereabouts, and the inextricable confusion between our dreams and reality.

Rat-tat-tat! The sleepless 'Boots' raps loudly at our door, and with loud cries of 'Halb vier, halb vier!' he rushes in and lights our single candle, and then vanishes as quickly as he came. Just as we are turning over for another 'forty winks,' the meaning of the whole business dawns upon us. We are in the Steinbock at Chur, and our 'diligence' over the Julier Pass is to start at five. We are on our feet in an instant.

No one who has not seen the courtyard of the post-office at Chur at five in the morning can in the least degree comprehend the profundity of confusion into which the animal man can fall. Somehow or other we get off at last, trusting we are 'right for' the Julier, and are not bound for Andermatt or some other place in a diametrically opposite direction to our object. We are sure of nothing; we hope we are going to St. Moritz; so we place ourselves passively in the hands of Fate—and of Swiss officials.

Thus ruminating on the uncertainty of life, and the inability of man to cope with destiny, we are relieved to find our-

selves at Thusis. We are at any rate on the right road, and now the beautiful part of our journey begins. We sit in awestruck admiration of the glories of the Schyn; for who can speak in the presence of such magnificence? As we drive round the sharp corners of the rocks, we tremble as we look down into the vast abyss; and as we look up at 'the fir-trees dark and high' that top the perpendicular escarps on every side, we almost 'think their slender tops are close against the sky.' Where does the earth end, and the infinity beyond begin? It is almost a relief to get beyond these endless walls of rock; to find ourselves in the warm sunlight, surrounded by all that is beautiful in Nature, and freed from all that is awful. We drive by pine-clad hills of lovely hue, past Tiefenkasten, and begin the ascent of the Julier Pass. And how beautiful it is! Beneath us in a deep hollow runs a mountain-stream; endless woods adorn the hills on every side; here and there villages are seen, settled peacefully in openings in the forests, or nestling amongst the trees. We revel in beauty; we are loosed from the fetters of awe. And yet again the landscape changes as we reach the summit of the pass; all becomes bare and desolate; nothing but ruin—the continual wear and tear of the mighty peaks that tower above us. Slowly we creep along amidst acres of rock-strewn land rendered impracticable for all the wants of man. No living thing is seen, save here

and there at long intervals flocks of mountain-sheep with their wild solitary shepherds. What a fearful life, to live in the midst of this desolation, with no friend, no companion, but dumb beasts!

Very grateful is the change from this waste when the panorama of the lakes of the Ober-Engadine breaks upon the view, a glorious announcement that we are nearing our journey's end. We drove quickly down the sharp zigzags into Silvaplana; changed horses for the last time; and, as the gray of evening began to rise, and the sun was hidden behind the hills,

‘and o’er the sky
The silvery haze of summer drawn,’

we saw St. Moritz for the first time. It nestles in the shade, looking cold and gray, on the side of a hill that rises steeply above it and terminates in the barren rocks of Piz Nair. It looks down on its beautiful lake—the most charming feature in the landscape—with pine-woods beyond. To the left we see the wooded shoulder over which the path to Poultesina leads. To the right we look down on the huge and hideous *bains* spoiling the prospect with its piles of hotels and bath-houses. Beyond we admire the steep slopes of the Corvatsch and the valley of the Inn, stretching into the gray distance of evening towards the Maloggia Pass.

And this is St. Moritz; this little village, in which the houses appear to be piled upon one another in indiscriminate confusion. The chief street, consisting of a steep hill, is, as is usual in Engadine villages, paved with small round pebbles, over which coachmen are warned to drive at a walk, by frequent notices of ‘Schritt Passo.’ The houses jut out into this principal thoroughfare in numerous angles and corners,

that form a succession of small quadrangles or triangles joined by narrow connecting ways. Why on earth the original inhabitants did not take the trouble to build their houses parallel to the street, it would be hard to divine.

Naturally our first object on the morning after our arrival is to inspect the place, and to make the acquaintance of our fellow-inhabitants. So we saunter off down the steep hill that leads to the baths, we pass between innumerable hotels, *pensions*, and lodging-houses. Soon we cross the Inn, at this point quite a narrow stream, and find ourselves at the baths. Here we meet the extremely miscellaneous concourse to be seen at most bath-places. They all are bent on one of two purposes—cure or enjoyment. They all saunter into the house that covers the sparkling *Paracelsusquelle*, take down their private glasses from their own peculiar ‘pigeon-holes,’ and drink their glasses of the ‘water of life.’ They all then proceed to walk their constitutional quarter of an hour in the narrow strip of shade thrown by the bath-house. Here we see people of high degree and of low degree; of good reputation, of doubtful reputation, and of no reputation at all. We see elegant English ladies side by side with buxom frousy German *frauen*; we notice sage-looking spectacled German professors patronising long-haired spectacled German students. We meet Italian princes and counts, dressed reputedly *à l’Anglaise*; we pass gorgeously dressed American girls in full flirtation with the same, and enjoying their ‘cure’ immensely; we notice two blooming English girls, fresh from the schoolroom, almost shoulder to shoulder with certain ladies, who would have benefited both themselves and society at

large by keeping away—by retiring, if possible, to the North Pole. We observe too a number of men and women of a peculiarly cosmopolitan character; they seem to speak all languages equally well, and will talk freely and willingly with any one in any tongue; they wear no distinctive costume, have no distinctive cast of countenance; we cannot guess who or what they are.

The clock on the Kurhaus strikes eleven. We perceive many people, holding small yellow tickets in their hands, and trooping into one of the Badhaus doors; let us follow them and learn their object. We find ourselves in a long passage, running the entire length of the building, on either side of which are many doors. They lead into little wooden cells, at the end of each of which stands apparently a large wooden coffin. At this hour of the day there are numerous men and women rushing hither and thither, and seraping and brushing and turning on taps, in preparation for the bathers. The whole place is stiflingly hot. We have seen enough; we will not intrude farther.

Such, then, is life at St. Moritz. If a man wishes really to walk,

to make grand ascents, and to run the risk of breaking his neck, he must go to Poultriesina, for St. Moritz is no place for such daring adventurers. If you appear in the street with an alpenstock, you are stared at as a lunatic; if you possess an ice-axe, you are avoided as a queer species of burglar; if you should wear thick boots and 'knicks,' the very dogs would bark at you as a most extraordinary phenomenon.

The fact is that St. Moritz is what would be called 'an awfully slow place.' For invalids it may be all very well, for there is always a fine bracing air—or rather draught—blowing down the valley. But for a man of even the smallest energy, for a man whose interests do not confine themselves to flirting, smoking, occasional dances, and very mild lawn-tennis, it is not an agreeable place. I know that we got fearfully tired of the place even during the short time we were there—only ten days—and we questioned the advantage of travelling three days to reach St. Moritz, when we could reach Brighton within three hours. Go to the Ober-Engadine by all means—go to Poultriesina—go anywhere, but not to St. Moritz!

MRS. LANCASTER'S RIVAL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS IN HER OWN CHATEAU.'

CHAPTER XVII.

ON THE LAWN.

MABEL had not the vexation of hearing General Hawke say that same evening to the butler, 'If Mrs. Lancaster calls again, Stevens, Miss Ashley is not at home.'

This unkind precaution was not needed, for Flora did not dream of going to Pensand again.

Anthony Strange appeared several times in the next two or three weeks, and, with the good manners which came naturally from his good heart, made himself so pleasant that Mabel was able to forget that unfortunate afternoon, and to talk to him as she did at first, openly and happily. The one drawback to his visits was his dislike to Fluffy. Anthony had a constitutional hatred of cats, and it was a very strong mark of his affection for Mabel that he could bear to sit quietly and talk to her, while the kitten was lying in her lap or playing about at their feet.

One beautiful evening Anthony had stayed rather later than usual. There was a sort of golden solemnity brooding over the world, floating down from under great purple clouds, which gathered as the afternoon waned. For a long time Pensand itself was in the shadow of these clouds, and the landscape it overlooked, the masses

of distant wood, the meeting of the waters,—all glowed in that golden light, with beautiful deep burnished colours, like a glorious picture of some other world. Anthony had been talking about Paradise, as it was imagined by different poets and painters in the varying spirit of their age; and suddenly discovering how late it was, he left Mabel with solemnised thoughts, to go on fancying for herself as she sat at the edge of the lawn, with the great magnolia still in flower on the terrace-wall below.

Presently the little dark figure in the shady hat was spied by somebody else from the windows, and he came across the lawn, walking lightly, so that she did not hear him till he was close to her. Then she looked round suddenly, and saw Randal standing behind her.

'O Randal!' she said.

He found it very pleasant to be welcomed back by such a bright smile, and had the satisfaction of feeling sure that Mabel was anything but a plain girl. Her eyes were quite beautiful, he decided; her features were not at all bad, and her expression, especially when she looked at him, was wonderfully pretty. Somehow she had lost the pinched distressed look which she had brought from the uncongenial atmosphere of school.

Randal lay down on the grass with a contented air, played with Fluffy, and looked up smiling at Mabel.

'Here I am at last,' he said. 'If you only knew how the thought of this pulled me through those hot tiring days!'

'Yes; this is a contrast to London,' said Mabel, her eyes wandering away again to the golden distance. 'How can anybody wish to live in London, when there is this to look at always!'

'That's all very well, Mabel, but it rains sometimes. And in London rain makes no difference.'

'We shall never agree about that.'

'Well, at any rate, there will always be Pensand,' said Randal. He saw she did not follow his thoughts at all, and went on after a moment: 'What have you been doing all this time? Have you finished the books?'

Mabel blushed violently. 'No,' she said, under her breath. Then venturing a glance at Randal, she saw such a curious smile on his face that she could not help staring at him. At first she thought it was not at all pleasant; then she could not feel sure, and wondered what he meant; he certainly did not look angry with her. Then she seemed suddenly to know all about it.

'You met Mr. Strange just now,' she said, 'and he told you.'

'Mabel, you are a witch. How do you know that?'

'Something in your face told me.'

'I must keep better guard over my face,' said Randal. 'I cannot have my thoughts read in spite of me. But you are right, you know. Let me observe that Anthony Strange is a most extraordinary fellow.'

'I hope you are not very angry with him,' said Mabel.

'We parted in peace. Do you know the origin of the word "silly"? It was not always opprobrious. Seely, *selig*, which means blessed. People born without their full share of wits were supposed in old times to have something heavenly about them—why, I don't know, as they are generally mischievous—to be under special protection. The idea lingers in the term "innocent." "A poor innocent," the country people say, when they wish to describe an idiot.'

'That is very funny,' said Mabel quietly, and colouring a little. 'But what has it to do with your meeting Mr. Strange?'

'Nothing, unless you like. But you asked me if I was angry with him, and those remarks occurred to me at the moment. We won't go further into that just now.'

'But you said the other day he was a genius,' said Mabel, rather inclined to be angry for Anthony.

'An extraordinary genius; a remarkable fellow altogether. But I was telling you about our meeting; it was on the hill there, not many minutes ago. He began by looking rather stiff, and I thought he was not going to speak to me. But he changed his mind, and without any preparatory remarks whatever went into those books. He wished to spare you the trouble of telling me what had happened to them. I don't know when I have admired Anthony so much. It is not every man, even if he is a clergyman, who has the spirit to insult another man without being sure that there is a good reason for it. He asked me how I dared to give you such books to read. After I had heard his opinion of them, I ventured to observe that I had not read them myself. Then dear old Anthony saw he had gone a little too far. "If you had read them," he said, "you

never would have brought them to her." "From what you say of them, most probably not," I answered him. "But I only knew they were universally admired." This set Anthony off on the wickedness of the age. He soon talked himself into a better temper, and was inclined to apologise for his violence towards the books and me. As it was Anthony, of course there was nothing more to be said. We parted in peace, as I told you. Now I daresay the books were rubbish, and deserved to be torn up—most books do. But Anthony was not justified in taking the law into his own hands. A bad precedent, making yourself judge and executioner of another person's property. What do you think? It must have vexed you very much at the time.'

'Yes, it did,' Mabel confessed.

'A childish proceeding altogether,' said Randal. 'If he had said to you in his patriarchal way, "My dear young friend, these books are not fit for you to read," your dutiful nature would have led you to put them away on a shelf. But this tearing-up business was foolish, unworthy of Anthony, one would say, if one did not know him pretty well. I owe you an apology, however, for bringing you into anything so disagreeable. That is all I care about. Will you forgive me, and believe in my good intentions?'

'Yes, indeed I will,' said Mabel earnestly.

'Thank you. Then we are forgiven all round—Anthony, the books, and me. Now let us talk about something pleasanter.'

Mabel wondered a little whether Randal would have dismissed the subject from his mind so easily, if he had known all that followed on that tearing-up scene. But it was altogether a sad and uncomfortable recollection, and she had

no wish to keep it uppermost in her thoughts. And Randal began talking of such delightful things that she soon forgot all about it.

'It is a shame,' he said, 'that you have never been on the water down there. One of these days we will have the boat out, and row up the river a little way. Would you like that?'

'More than anything I can imagine at this moment,' said Mabel. 'I wish we were there now, down in that golden glow where that little boat is sailing. How lovely it would be!'

'I am far too contented here to wish myself anywhere else,' said Randal.

'O Randal,' exclaimed Mabel, 'I have something to tell you! Mrs. Lancaster came one day.'

'Did she?' said Randal.

His face was bent down, and he was studying some little flower in the grass.

'I suppose,' said Mabel, 'as she heard nothing from us, she thought the General would not object. And he really did not seem to mind much. He saw her, and was quite polite and kind.'

'Let me observe,' said Randal, in his sleepest voice, 'that my father has his faults, like other old men; but is not absolutely an ogre or a Giant Despair. Did you expect him to treat Mrs. Lancaster with any personal rudeness?'

'O no, of course not,' said Mabel rather hastily. 'Did you think she would come, Randal?'

'No, not much. And yet I ought to have considered that you were the attraction.'

'I am not much of an attraction,' said Mabel. 'She is very sweet and charming; but I don't think she can be very happy, poor thing. There is something uneasy about her.'

'Yes; I know what you mean,'

said Randal. 'She is not quite sure of her position—nor of Dick. I don't wonder, for he is about as slippery a fish as swims in the Mora.'

'I hate to hear of those things,' said Mabel, getting up. 'Do you know that it is nearly dinner-time?'

'Pray don't hate; it is spasmodic, and like Anthony Strange,' said Randal.

Mabel gave him a rather impatient glance; she did not like that indifferent cynical manner of his. But he answered her with a smile that made her little anger seem ridiculous, and they two and Fluffy walked very happily together across the lawn.

CHAPTER XVIII.

RANDAL'S BOAT.

MABEL thought that perhaps Randal would take her out in the boat the next day. But he did not; he went to Morebay by train in the morning, and was out again by himself all the afternoon, so that she scarcely saw him except in the evening. Then he was rather abstracted, and not by any means at his pleasantest. Mabel made every excuse for him, however; she thought he was tired, and that she must not expect too much, and she tried to spare him the trouble of entertaining them by talking with all her might to the General, who had never seen her so lively. Randal lay back in his chair and looked on, a smile presently driving away the cross lines from his mouth. When Mabel wished him good-night he squeezed her hand very tight, and whispered, 'Good little woman! Where did you get your understanding?' so that she went to bed quite happy in her mind.

The next day all was sunshine. Early in the afternoon they went down together into the Combe, where a smartly-painted boat was already rocking on the green water. Mabel was settled comfortably on her cushions in the stern; Randal, looking wonderfully well in his flannel suit, took the sculls, and they glided away down the creek to the broad dancing river. Under the overhanging trees, past the rough old mill with its black wheel working, out past the sandbanks into the strong fast current of the Penyr. It was anything but a still and peaceful river; there was rocking of waves in the sunlight, the water flashing with rainbow colours as the light boat danced along.

Randal watched his companion's face with pleased interest. Mabel was almost too happy to talk; the freedom and the glory, the fresh salt air, the white sea-birds skimming over the water, the delightful easy motion, the fact of being at last on that river that she had watched for so many days from the Castle lawn,—it seemed impossible to take it all in thoroughly. She remembered how weeks ago Dick Northcote had told her—that tiresome Dick; recollections of him would always thrust themselves in at the wrong time—about the General's boat in the Combe, and how she ought to ask him to take her out in it. Certainly he was right; nothing could be more enjoyable. Randal, understanding her, did not try to talk, but only said a word now and then about the rudder-strings, which Mabel pulled according to his orders in an absent sort of way.

He rowed down towards St. Denys and the Mora, past the red powder-boat anchored all alone in the middle of the river. It

seemed like rowing into the world, as they came in sight of passing boats and steamers, of old blackened hulks resting there after a long stormy life in foreign waters. Mabel would have liked to go much farther among them all, down into the great harbour where the ironclads lay, among all the noise and life and business of sea-going Morebay; but Randal did not mean to do that. After giving her a glimpse of the Mora, he rowed back up the Penyr, and in a wonderfully short time, as it seemed to Mabel, who could not be satisfied with gazing at all the beauty round her, afloat and on shore, they were again opposite the mouth of Pensand Combe.

'Are you tired of it?' said Randal.

'O no! Must we go back already?'

'Certainly not. We will row a little farther up, and land under the rocks. There are nice places up there for sitting down.'

Just above the Combe there was a little cluster of low stone houses by the river, where the rocks were worn away at the creek's mouth. From these a ferry-boat, rowed by one of those amphibious boys who pass their life on the water, crossed to the opposite shore and back again, about once in every hour. The passage took six minutes, but longer if the weather was rough. Randal and Mabel crossed the bows of the shabby old boat in mid-stream; there was only one passenger, a poor woman.

'What is there on the other side?' asked Mabel.

'The village of Sadleigh, behind the hill, and several pretty houses, besides Lord Western's place, which is now let to a Morebay merchant,' said Randal.

'Mrs. Lancaster told me one day

that she has some friends living over there, and that there is quite a rivalry between the two sides of the water. She and I agreed in preferring St. Denys.'

'So should I,' said Mabel. 'Randal, did you notice how that boy in the ferry-boat stared and smiled at you?'

'No. He was envying me, perhaps, and contrasting his boat and his passenger with mine.'

'He looked more friendly than envious.'

'Nice boy! Perhaps he was counting how many times he would have to make that *trajet* before he could paint his boat like mine, and wear flannels to match. I don't object to that; I always encourage ambition.'

They were well past the houses now. Behind some projecting rocks, on a beach of small pebbles, with low dry platforms of rock here and there, Randal ran his boat in, and Mabel found herself in a lovely lonely place, quite different from anything she had ever seen before. The wall of dark red rocks was pierced by caves, and over their dark mouths hung festoons of ivy and green creepers, with ferns and lichen and wild rock-flowers for tapestry all round. The green trailing things hung over from the top of the rocks, and seemed to grow and thrive well in the salt air. Lower down on the beach itself there were cushions of soft fine grass, a pale dead green, with tufts of small purple flowers in every little niche. From this corner, with its cliff-wall behind, its floor of sea-washed pebbles and flowers and grass, its broad foreground of ever-moving water, there was no house or living thing to be seen, except the land-birds that fluttered down the face of the rock, or their sisters of the sea that, with white wings out-

spread, flashed in the sun away upon the river.

Mabel wandered up and down for a few minutes, delighted with all this, and then came and sat down by Randal on one of those green cushions spread on purpose for them on a low flat rock. He looked rather grave and rather thoughtful, she fancied. Certainly, the thought came next, there was something about his face neither strong nor happy; so pale, even on this hot day, and so self-contained, too, as if he could never give any one his perfect confidence. Perhaps it is not quite prudent for a girl to let herself moralise too much on the expression of a young man's face. Such studies are apt to end in a little confusion, as Mabel's did, when she suddenly became aware that Randal was looking at her.

'What are you thinking of, Mabel?' he said.

'I was wondering if you were tired,' said Mabel. 'Rowing must be very hard work.'

'Thank you. No, I am not tired. It all depends on knowing how to reserve one's strength. If you know how much will be wanted, and for how long, you can always make it enough. Supposing that you have a fair allowance, of course. But did all the thought in your face mean nothing but that?'

'O, I don't know,' said Mabel, colouring a little. 'I think such silly things sometimes. It was not exactly altogether about you, perhaps; but I was thinking how little people really know of each other.'

'Not exactly altogether about me, perhaps? Partly about me, then, so I may answer it. Did it ever strike you what a good thing that is?'

The words sounded rather unkind and mocking, but they were

not either of these, as Randal said them in his gentle indifferent voice.

'No,' said Mabel. 'I don't think it is a good thing. I should like to know all about my friends, all their thoughts.'

'Would you like to know all my thoughts?'

'Yes,' said Mabel, smiling, though she thought it a little tiresome of him to insist on giving their talk this personal turn.

'Does it make you angry to be told you are a child?' Mabel shook her head, smiling still. 'Because words fail to tell you the childishness of such a wish as that. Wise people say that if we knew the thoughts of our dearest friend, we should hate and despise him. Under those circumstances no friendship would be possible, and the world would be a howling wilderness.'

'But I don't believe it,' said Mabel. 'At any rate, we should be as bad ourselves.'

Randal laughed, the thing he did most seldom.

'Horrid wicked people of course have thoughts that would make us hate them,' Mabel went on, in a decided manner. 'But not our friends, not the people we care about. I am sure you might know all mine—at least—'

'I am sure I might, too, though there seems to be an "at least" even there,' said Randal. 'Not that I have any right to expect such confidence from you. But now tell me, Mabel. If you liked any one, supposing him to be a good sort of fellow, would you withdraw your liking if he turned out to be not so good—to have his full share or more of human failings?'

'I am not sure,' said Mabel thoughtfully. 'It would depend on what sort of failings they were.'

'Ah, yes; no doubt,' said Randal.

He was going to say a good deal more; but checked himself suddenly, being aware that they were no longer alone. A woman was standing at the corner of their rocky screen, looking at them. Mabel saw her first, and the look of startled pleasure in her face made Randal turn his eyes that way. He frowned and bit his lips; but these angry signs were not noticed apparently, either by Mabel or the intruder, who came forward smiling, with a bright colour in her face. It was Mrs. Lancaster.

CHAPTER XIX.

RANDAL AND FLORA.

'I AM so glad! Did you know we were here, or have you found us quite by accident?' said Mabel, as she went forward to meet her friend, sliding among the pebbles.

'Who would have dreamed of seeing you so far from St. Denys!' said Randal, in his usual manner. 'Have you dropped from the sky, or do you generally haunt this beach? Can you answer all our questions at once?'

Flora gave him a curious quick look, and answered Mabel.

'You are surprised, I daresay. The fact is, that I went to-day to see some friends of mine at Sadleigh, and came back just now by the ferry. The boy told me that he had just seen you rowing up here, and thought you must have landed in this cove.'

'Then the boy did know you, Randal, and that was why he stared so,' said Mabel.

'Yes, the boy knows Mr. Hawke by sight very well. He is one of Mrs. Sale's sons. He lives at that cottage on the road where you took shelter from the thunder-storm.'

'They are good-for-nothing rascals, those Sales,' said Randal.

'At any rate they know no better, and have had very little in the way of example,' said Flora. 'For my part, I am much obliged to Tommy Sale. He has done me a great service.'

This was a pleasant thing to say, but Mabel did not quite know what to make of her friend's manner. Its animation seemed almost unnatural; there was something strained and odd in her voice and her looks. She was not unlike what she had been during the last part of her visit at the Castle. Only her manner then was a little exaggerated to-day.

'Are you going back by the Combe?' said Randal politely. 'Perhaps I may have the pleasure of rowing you in, when you and Miss Ashley have had enough of this. It will spare you some rough walking.'

'No, Mr. Hawke, thank you,' said Flora. 'Two people are quite enough for your boat.'

'You have no idea of the capacities of my boat,' said Randal.

'I won't trouble you to row me,' replied Flora.

Randal made her a slight bow, smiling faintly. He was even paler than usual. He walked down the beach to the water's edge, and stood there for a minute, looking up and down the river. Mrs. Lancaster stood and stared after him. Then she clasped her hands together, and, to Mabel's extreme horror, made a little gesture of wringing them. It occurred to Mabel, with a shiver of dismay, that this pretty elegant woman, who was so strangely different at different times, could not be quite in her right mind. With a sudden impulse of pity, she laid her hand on Flora's arm, and looked up earnestly into her face.

'What is the matter?' she said, in a low voice.

'The matter!' cried Flora, with a small burst of laughing. 'My dear Miss Ashley, what are you talking about?'

'I beg your pardon,' said Mabel, frightened, and instantly withdrawing her hand.

'O, don't beg my pardon. I am so glad. The world is a charming place, isn't it?' said Flora. 'You are a sweet girl. You are sorry for any one who is not so happy as yourself, are you not?'

These strange words, spoken in a clear ringing voice, made Mabel move backwards in horrified amazement, while Randal turned suddenly round and came back to them.

'Miss Ashley does not understand you, Mrs. Lancaster,' he said, standing before Flora and looking her straight in the face. 'Neither do I.'

'O, doesn't she? Don't you?' said Flora.

'Come here,' said Randal.

He walked a few yards along the beach, and she followed him silently. When they were out of Mabel's hearing, he stopped and looked at her again.

'What can be your reason for following me about in this way?'

'You know. You half confessed it yesterday.'

'I did nothing of the kind. Let me tell you that being jealous and suspicious is the surest way to make yourself and others miserable. And I will not endure this sort of thing.'

His voice and manner seemed to bring Flora back to herself, though it was a miserable self enough.

'Randal,' she said, 'it is you who make me jealous and suspicious. You could make me happy by saying two or three words, and

you will not. I want to know the truth—just the truth—for I don't understand you; and if you go on in this way you will drive me mad.'

'That means, I suppose,' said Randal, 'that I am to have no peace till there has been a thorough explanation. Cannot you go quietly home, or is it a pleasure to you to torment yourself and me and that girl in this ridiculous way?'

'Don't put me off like that,' said Flora. 'You are a coward; and I have a good mind to go and tell her everything.'

Randal smiled, though even his lips were white.

'Well, we must talk it out, I see,' he said quietly. 'You are very unreasonable. Stay here a moment. I must ask Miss Ashley to wait for me.'

'Do; she will be too happy,' said Flora.

She turned her back on him, and stood gazing over the water, though one may doubt whether she saw anything. The beautiful afternoon was going off a little with the turn of the tide; gray clouds had come up, and a low wind was moaning on the river; it swayed restlessly, and the small waves broke splashing on the shingle. Some wild and melancholy power seemed to have taken possession of the day.

Mabel, waiting in some anxiety, was glad to see Randal coming back to her.

'What is it?' she said. 'Is Mrs. Lancaster ill?'

'Not exactly ill,' said Randal. 'But she is—very peculiar at times, Mabel. She has troubles which—I know more about than any one; and she can't be satisfied without a talk with me. Would you mind our leaving you here for a few minutes? She wants me to take a turn along the

beach with her. We shall not be far off. You won't mind waiting in this safe little corner?"

Randal was agitated, and spoke at first with hesitation, but gained confidence as he went on. Mabel looked at him wonderingly. It was impossible that she should not feel the strangeness of his intimacy with Mrs. Lancaster. It was a mystery, though she was inclined to believe that there was a little oddity about Flora—her manner to herself just now had been so extraordinary.

'I shall not mind waiting at all,' she said, and there was in her voice and look a sort of womanly quietness which was very attractive to Randal, horribly disturbed as he was.

'Thank you, Mabel,' he said. 'You are a noble girl. I shall not be long away from you, I hope.'

Mabel did not quite feel her own nobility. She smiled, and he went back to Flora. Mabel waited there very patiently, gathering the purple flowers that grew among the rocks.

Her two friends walked away along the far-stretching beach, at first silently. Flora did not seem able to take her eyes away from the gray and green surface of the water, with its monotonous movement. Randal was looking down and frowning. At last, when Mabel was left far behind, out of sight, he stopped and said,

'Where are you going, Flora?"

She looked round at him suddenly, as if startled. Her blue eyes were wet with tears, and the bright colour of excitement was gone from her face.

'I don't know,' she said. 'Not to heaven, I fancy.'

'Don't take such a dreary view of things,' said Randal. 'Sit down here. I have a great deal to say to you, if you can listen reasonably.'

I do not think there are many people like Randal Hawke in the world. I hope not. People who have ways of disarming the most righteous anger, and of being still loved by those whose hearts they are coolly breaking.

For a few moments, perhaps, Flora thought it was one of those happy old evenings in the Combe, which made up to her for so many weeks and months of lonely faithfulness. And yet no; the Combe was peaceful and shady and still, while here that restless river went flowing on, without pause or pity. After all, this was real life, and the other only a dream.

'I never knew you to be jealous before, Flora,' Randal said presently. 'And I have set you no example of it. I did not object to your flirtations with that fool Dick.'

'No; you certainly had no cause,' said Flora. 'Flirtation, do you call that? It did you more good than harm, as long as it lasted. I was glad when he went away, though, for his own sake.'

'Ah, you always had a great deal of consideration for him.'

'Don't be absurd as well as cruel! Randal, can't you put an end to all this wretchedness?"

'Do you think it is pleasant for me?' said Randal.

'I don't know. You must have left off caring for me completely, or you could not be so cold and horrid. The way in which you spoke and behaved yesterday—O, it was not you at all, it was some indifferent stranger. What does it all mean?—but I know that too well.'

'When you talk of my manner yesterday,' said Randal, 'you forget that anything I may have said or done was provoked by yourself. You attacked me in a very extraordinary way, and almost accused

me of being false to you. You would not be reasonable for a moment; and you are just the same still. You behave like a passionate child, and expect me to be just as foolish and impulsive as yourself.'

Poor Flora! She certainly could not have accounted for the sudden variations in her mood. When one's life seems likely to be wrecked, and all the different aspects of this catastrophe come crowding into one's mind at once, it is a great wonder if that mind remains calm and reasonable. It is more likely to catch at every chance of possible help, however inconsistent and unlikely, as a drowning creature would clutch at the very hand that was pushing it under water. Of course Flora had expected her fears and jealousies to be laughed off at once. She had not really known what they were till Randal had treated them seriously, and had refused to set her mind at ease by flatly contradicting her.

'O Randal, you are quite mistaken,' she said very gently. 'I don't want you to be foolish and impulsive. I only want to know the truth. If you have left off caring for me, you might tell me so. I may have done something to offend you; if so, do forgive me, for I did not mean it. Dear Randal, tell me all about it.'

Randal was touched for the moment by her gentleness. He put his arm round her and kissed her, remembering that after all they had been engaged for two years, and that she had the best right to know his plans and intentions. Of course she must know them some day, poor thing. Only he had intended to put off telling her for some time yet, till they were really quite decided. He had thought he might be an exception to the good old rule—

'Tis well to be off with the old love
Before you are on with the new.'

Because if any evil fate were to turn Mabel obstinately against him, Flora after all was far prettier, and he had cared for her very much in his way. But now this sudden flame of jealousy was come to spoil it all. He blamed himself for not warning Flora against going to the Castle; but it was no use going back to the past; it seemed as if he must make the best he could of the present.

'As for my leaving off caring for you, Flora,' he said, 'that is all nonsense. The thing is impossible. One does not bring half one's life to an end in that way. I have told you all about it many times; how I used to look at you in church, when I was a boy, and think that if I could marry such a beautiful princess as you, life would indeed be worth living. You know that if I had not depended on my father it would have been all right long ago. I might have been a different sort of fellow altogether, and certainly should have spared you and myself all this misery. He would have found that I cost him less in the end, for you would have looked after me, and I should not have ruined myself and him with gambling, as I have.'

'But it is not too late now to stop all that,' said Flora eagerly.

Where she found the gleam of hope in this talk of Randal's I do not know. But there was something very sweet to the poor wounded soul in being told even that she might have had a good influence on him. It was not likely, however, that a pretty plebeian like herself would have had any real power to withdraw him from his natural tastes and companions. The thing might

have been just possible before they were married; certainly not afterwards.

'Rather late to talk about stopping,' said Randal, 'when I am so tremendously in debt that the only thing left to us is to mortgage Pensand. And naturally my father does not care for that idea.'

'Is there nothing that can be done? Why didn't you tell me before?'

'One does not care to talk about such disagreeable things,' said Randal.

Flora sat and looked at him in silence. She was much calmer now; the change in his manner had done a great deal for her in that way, and she was almost her usual self again. She was able to say very quietly, after a long pause,

'Is there anything that I can do, Randal?'

'I want you to understand the state of the case; how hopelessly foolish and imprudent we have been, in this engagement of ours. However likely it was, two years ago, that we might be able to marry some day, the prospect has gone on getting dimmer and dimmer, till at last there's nothing but a blank. I am sorry for you and for myself; but you must quite see that, Flora.'

At that moment Flora Lancaster's usual wits failed her, and she did not in any way connect this explanation with her other anxieties.

'O,' she said, 'if you think I am not willing to wait, you don't know me, Randal. Things may get bright again, and if the worst comes to the worst, there is my little fortune, you must remember. We might manage to live on that. My father will help us too—if he ever forgives me for keeping the secret so long.'

'I quite expected you to say all that,' said Randal, 'but don't you see that by your goodness you are only making things worse for me? It is hard enough to have to give you up, Flora, for any one that I can never love as I do you. It is a terribly hard fate for both of us, my dearest Flora. I wish with all my heart the money belonged to you; but don't you see a man has duties to his family and his home and so on, that make it impossible to follow his own inclinations always? It seems as if my only way to save us from ruin—my father, and all that—was to marry some one with money. I am more sorry than I can tell you—can't bear to think of it; but it really is simple madness, in these days, to marry without enough to live on.'

Flora listened quite calmly to all this.

'How long is it since you made up your mind?' she said.

'A few weeks,' said Randal. 'At least, I have known for more than that time that something of the sort must happen. But of course, till I saw that things were quite hopeless, I did not wish—'

'Till you had made sure of the heiress,' said Flora, with a cold quietness which made him look at her wonderingly. 'How blind I have been, and how undignified and foolish! I wish you had done me the honour of telling me all this some time ago; not that it really matters—'

'Don't be so cruel, Flora,' said Randal, trying to take her hand.

'Don't touch me, if you please. Cruel! You never cared for me in the least.'

'I did, and do still, with all my heart,' said Randal.

She looked so lovely in her indignation that for one wild moment he was tempted to beg her forgiveness, to renounce his designs

on Mabel Ashley and her money, to swear eternal faithfulness to Flora and poverty. But Randal's good angel seldom approached him now, or only to fly away with one flutter of his wings. He was there on the beach for a moment, as the young man's cheek crimsoned slowly with shame under the stern eyes of the woman who had risen from her place beside him.

'You are a miserable liar,' said Flora deliberately. 'If you had ever cared for me, you would not have been quite so selfish. You would have thought of me a little, and would have kept yourself out of these debts as far as you could. A few weeks ago! Good heavens! And how many times we have met since then! and what letters you have written!'

'You will oblige me by returning those letters, perhaps,' said Randal, who had regained his native coolness on hearing himself called a miserable liar. 'And I think you had better try and control yourself, Flora. You must have expected something of this kind, at least since yesterday.'

'Since yesterday! Where was I yesterday? I don't know,' said Flora.

She put up her hand to her head, and walked down to the water's edge. Randal stood looking after her, and wishing himself well out of this unpleasant business. He had hardly expected Flora, who had worshipped him, to turn round so completely, and behave in this disagreeable, contemptuous, insulting way. As if nobody had ever broken off an engagement before—and for much weaker reasons too. Any pity he had felt for her was fast changing into angry disgust. A woman who could allow herself to call him names, who could show her unwillingness to give him up in

this undignified way, did not seem to deserve much consideration. Flora's inbred vulgarity was showing itself, he decided, and he began to congratulate himself on his escape. She would probably have tried him very much when her beauty was gone, and her pretty ways with it.

Some time passed, he did not know how long, as he stood there thinking, and gazing at Flora, a solitary figure against the gray waste of waters. A cold whistling wind was blowing, and clouds were covering the bright summer sky. Perhaps it was not wonderful that those two should have forgotten the existence of anybody besides themselves. But at last, with a start of real consternation, Randal remembered the girl he had left waiting for him on the beach yonder. He had asked her to wait a few minutes; he thought it must be nearly an hour since he and Flora walked away from her together. He was seized with anxiety; a delicate nervous girl, left alone for so long, and perhaps angry with him for leaving her. Certainly no consideration for Flora Lancaster must interfere with his going back to her at once. Yet he could not leave Flora standing there alone by the river, in her present state of mind. The situation struck Randal as almost comic. He gave himself no time to think about it, however, but walked down and joined Flora where she stood.

'We have left Miss Ashley alone for a long time,' he said. 'Shall we go back to her now?'

'As you please,' said Flora. 'Yes; the poor girl may be frightened.'

Randal was immensely relieved by this answer, and by the ease and coolness of Flora's manner. He walked along by her side with-

out speaking. That pretty stretch of river beach had never seemed so long! But at last they turned a corner, and came to the place where they had left Mabel, among the rocks and grass and wild flowers. There was the boat, swinging by its chain; but Mabel was gone.

CHAPTER XX.

THE LITTLE CART.

THE time seemed long to Mabel, alone there in the cove. She soon got tired of waiting; she had gathered her flowers, and there was nothing to do. The cheerfulness of the day, too, seemed to be gone from it, and the breeze that came blowing over the water had the chill in it that often belongs to August evenings — a warning breath of autumn in the summer air. Mabel walked up and down a little, waited, wondered, felt half angry with Randal for leaving her, and thought he might have talked to Mrs. Lancaster another day.

Time went on, and the length of it became quite extraordinary. Mabel shivered, and feared it was going to rain. She walked a little way along the beach in the direction that those two had taken; but though she could see what seemed like an immense distance, they were nowhere visible. This was because they were sitting down, hidden from her by rocks; but she did not think of that, and began to feel rather miserable. It was so desolate to be left all alone on this wild beach, with no sound but the splashing of the water and the low rattle of the shingle. Mabel was not a girl to submit patiently to this sort of thing, and after a few minutes more of waiting and reflection, it struck her

that she might as well walk home. It was rather a long way for her, past the houses, along the rough lane that skirted the Combe, and up the hill to the Castle. She could make it shorter, however, by turning into the field where Anthony and she had first met, and going through the garden that way. Randal would no doubt be alarmed when he came back and found her gone; but that was no more than he deserved. And the boat must take care of itself.

So Mabel turned the corner of the rocks, and went on with slow painful steps, glad to get off the uneven beach and on the stony road by the houses of the ferry.

One or two of these houses, rough and untidy as they were, had small gardens in front of them. The low stone walls that bordered these were bright with flowers, and a great tall drooping fuchsia made an arch over the gate of one. It was a picturesque place altogether. There was a carpenter's yard, with old boats and broken carts lying together in confusion, and a scent of tar and wood in the air; there were fishing-nets spread out, and boats hauled up, on the rough slope of beach from the road to the river. A noise of hammering was going on here, and three or four men were standing round one of the boats, which was being mended. One of these men, in his blue jersey, was a very handsome fellow, with a long black beard; another, tall, brown, and sunburnt, with the sleeves of his flannel shirt rolled up to his elbows, looked like a gentleman. Mabel, as she made her slow progress along the road above, could not help looking at this group. One or two of the men turned their heads and looked at her, and this last one, with a lightning quickness of movement which made his

companions stare and smile, pulled down his sleeves, made a dive into the stern of the boat for a blue serge jacket, which he pulled on and buttoned up, and with wet boots and dirty hands walked up the beach towards the young lady, taking off his hat with a smile.

'How do you do, Miss Ashley? I'm not fit to shake hands with you,' said Dick.

Mabel forgot herself so far as to blush with pleasure at this meeting. To be met in her trouble and loneliness by somebody at once strong and friendly, though most untidy and smelling of fish, was anything but disagreeable. Without any reason for it, she felt quite sure that Dick would take care of her and see her safely home.

'How very strange to meet you here!' she said.

'Nothing so strange in that,' said Dick. 'I have been out fishing, but the boat sprang a leak, so we were obliged to put in here to have her looked to. But how do *you* come to be here, in the name of all that's wonderful? Alone, too!'

It appeared to Mabel that she could not answer this question with any circumstance. She did not wish to talk to him of Randal, and still less of Mrs. Lancaster. In fact, a moment's reflection showed her that it was all his fault; it was probably about him that poor Mrs. Lancaster wanted to talk to Randal—though that was odd enough. The world was a mystery, and among the most mysterious things in it was Dick's honest face, with those pleasant smiling eyes that looked so straight and truthfully. Mabel felt again, as she had felt when she saw him before, that her faith in everybody was sadly shaken. If the owner of such a face as that could

be a deceiver, it seemed as if no face could tell the truth. Randal, in comparison with Dick, was a whole library of unknown tongues. Dick looked as if he would never wait to be asked what his thoughts were, but would tell them out quite frankly to any one who cared about them. He could have nothing to hide. A shallow nature, some people might say; at any rate a transparent one.

'I came in a boat,' said Mabel rather stiffly, 'and now I am walking home.'

'You will find that a long business,' said Dick, with compassion.

'Yes, I'm afraid I shall,' said Mabel.

Suddenly, as she stood there, the feeling came over her again of intense loneliness, of weakness, pain, and weariness, almost more than she could bear. Randal was unkind, and his doings were mysterious; Anthony was far away, and had made it impossible for her to appeal to him; there was no woman to take any notice of her, not even poor Mrs. Lancaster now, absorbed in her own troubles. And here stood a tall strong man, looking at her as kindly as possible, but no doubt thinking her a bore—the very last person, too, in whom she ought to place any confidence—Mrs. Lancaster's lover, and even in that character 'as slippery a fish as swam in the Mora.'

But at the same time Mabel's bones were aching, her head was aching, and she felt that to walk to Pensand Castle was as far beyond her strength as to walk to Morebay itself. She half regretted that she had not waited for Randal where he left her; but it was too late now. She stood with drooped eyes, poking at a stone with her parasol. Then suddenly large tears gathered in her eyes and ran down her cheeks. She

put out her hand to Dick, and muttered a few words :

'O, do please take me home. I am so tired.'

'I thought you were,' said Dick. 'I thought there was something wrong. Here, take my arm ; come this way.'

Mabel felt much too spiritless to rebel. She was conveyed in under the arch of fuchsia, up the garden-walk, and into a stone kitchen, beautifully clean. Here she was put into a large chintz armchair. A young woman with soft dark eyes came forward sympathisingly.

'Look here, Mrs. Fenner,' said Dick. 'This is Miss Ashley of the Castle. She is out alone, and very tired. Give her a cup of tea, will you ? I shall be back in two minutes.'

Dick was a little longer than that, having been delayed by a conversation with the ferry-boy, who came up to communicate what he knew of Miss Ashley's movements, how Mr. Hawke and Mrs. Lancaster were gone, and the boat was left all by itself. Dick cut him rather short.

'Well, the boat will be all right, I suppose, unless you walk off with the cushions, which I don't advise you to do.'

Mrs. Fenner, meanwhile, attended to Mabel with the tenderest hospitality. Her husband was a brother of the St. Denys boatman, and more satisfactory, if not quite so good-looking. He was well off, and owned a cart and pony, besides one or two large boats.

'Thank you, Mrs. Fenner,' said Dick, reappearing under the low doorway. 'I have asked Dan to put the pony in, and to let me drive Miss Ashley up to the Castle. I'll bring it back. Will you give me some water to wash my hands, please ? I don't feel fit to drive a lady.'

He looked at Mabel and smiled.

'O Mr. Northcote,' she said, 'I can walk perfectly ; indeed I can. You are busy fishing. I can't bear to be so troublesome to you.'

'I have done fishing for to-day, and the boat is being mended, as you saw,' said Dick.

'It's the cart as ain't fit for the young lady to ride in,' said Mrs. Fenner. 'Nor for you neither, sir. I am ashamed.'

Mabel thought this was the strangest adventure she had ever had in her life. Dick took his place beside her in the funny little cart, and the pony trotted off at once. They made a sudden turn inland, under the cliff, and so instantly lost sight of the houses with their gardens, the wild smiling children with their dark eyes and shock heads, the picturesque group on the beach, Tommy Sale staring with all his might, the broad gray melancholy-looking river. A rough lane indeed it was, with rugged surfaces of rock here and there, winding its way past more stone cottages, and then between the mill and the cliff, which was here covered with trees and grass. The tide was ebbing fast ; the mill-wheel was still, and a great part of the creek was bared to its mud and sandbanks.

Dick was silent at first, and Mabel made use of this time to scold herself very bitterly. How could she be so silly as to give way always at the wrong time ?

'The Combe is very pretty, isn't it ?' she said, determined to talk to her kind driver, and not to be stupid any more.

At that moment the lane began to ascend, and the pony to walk. Dick got down from his place, and walked beside Mabel with his hand on the cart.

'I can't imagine,' said Dick, staring at the narrow channel of water, 'how Hawke meant to

bring you back. He might have done it three-quarters of an hour ago; but the tide ebbs here so very fast. I wonder he didn't consider that.'

'How did you know?' said Mabel; and stopped in some embarrassment.

'The boy that rows the ferry-boat told me,' said Dick. 'I didn't ask him, Miss Ashley. You did not choose to tell me, and that was enough.'

Mabel was silent for a minute or two, looking gravely straight before her. She reflected that this ferry-boy had no doubt mentioned Mrs. Lancaster's name too.

'It was not his fault,' she said, with dignity. 'If poor Mrs. Lancaster had not wished to talk to him, we should have gone home some time ago.'

'Well, it was rather cool of them,' said Dick, 'to walk off and leave you alone. They might have chosen another time for their confidences.'

In her heart Mabel agreed with him, though she was amazed at his speaking in this unconcerned way; and it struck her that he really ought to be made to feel what he was doing. Even a girl like herself might do some good—might give him a hint, without showing that she knew anything.

'Mrs. Lancaster seemed unhappy, and wished to speak to Randal about some troubles of hers, which were very important,' she said.

'O, poor thing! And she joined you on the beach for that purpose?' said Dick.

'Yes, I suppose so,' said Mabel.

'I see,' said Dick. 'Poor woman! I'm sorry for her.'

Mabel could not help staring at him; for it seemed as if such a monster of hard-hearted wickedness, such a literal wolf in sheep's

clothing, had never come in her way before. Yet it was difficult to show, or even to feel, the proper amount of abhorrence of him. He walked along so easily, with his long steps, one strong brown hand helping the cart up the hill, looking at her, as he spoke, with such fearless eyes, and saying these heartless things in a jolly sort of voice, without any particular pretence of feeling in it. Mabel thought he was a very dangerous companion, and tried to make herself wish that she had insisted on walking home alone.

'Mr. Northcote,' she said, in the grave little manner that amused Dick, though at the same time it made him feel half angry with the silly girl, 'we shall be at the top of the hill directly.'

'Yes, we shall,' said Dick. 'But there is a longer hill afterwards up to the Castle.'

'But I can walk up that quite well,' said Mabel. 'Please don't take me further than the top of this one.'

'You must let me do as I think best about that,' said Dick; and so they went on.

'Have you had much boating?' said Dick presently.

'O no! This is the first day we have been out. I did enjoy it so much. Randal is here very little, you know, so there has not been any opportunity.'

'You like him, then?' said Dick.

'Yes, very much. He is very agreeable.'

'One of the pleasantest fellows in the world when he chooses, and the cleverest too. Almost too clever to live,' said Dick.

'Is he really?' said Mabel, hardly aware of the tone in Dick's voice, which made this a doubtful compliment. 'Did he do anything great at college?'

'Not that I ever heard of,' said Dick. 'Clever in the ways of the

world, I meant. Not so much with books—though I daresay he would be sharp enough to do anything he chose there. Have you seen my aunt again? I have been away, you know, for several weeks.'

'No,' said Mabel. 'We don't see anybody at Pensand except Mr. Strange.'

'Have you been to Carweston?'

'I drove through the village one day with Randal, and we saw Mrs. Strange in the road.'

'She is a delightful woman,' said Dick. 'You ought to know her. There are lots of people about here that you would like, if only you happened to meet them. Suppose we have a picnic—an excursion up the Mora. Randal Hawke and I can arrange it, and ask everybody. Wouldn't it be fun?'

'Yes, great fun,' said Mabel, a little doubtfully; she did not feel sure of Randal's opinion.

Dick was not discouraged, and went on talking hopefully about his picnic. There was a little steamer at Morebay which would be just the thing to convey the whole party up the river. They might land and dine under some lovely wooded cliffs, and spend the pleasantest afternoon doing what they chose. Then they would come back in the evening, in the

splendid harvest moonlight, and land at St. Denys, not too tired to be cheerful and enjoy the drive home.

Dick went off to one or two New Zealand picnics, which had far surpassed anything of the kind in England. It appeared that they knew how to do things out there. Mabel was amused, and did not make any more attempts to send him back.

Fenner's stout little pony climbed the last hill; probably it was the first time that he and his cart had ever passed under the old gate-tower, or stopped in front of General Hawke's door. It stood open, so that there was no need to ring the bell; and Mabel, having been helped down from the cart, stood alone on her guardian's threshold, to shake hands with Dick and smile her thanks.

'You are a friend in need,' she said.

'Do you remember our journey?' said Dick. 'Is it all pleasanter than you expected then?'

'Yes, certainly it is,' said Mabel, with a faint sadness under her smile.

'That's right. I'm glad to hear it,' said Dick. 'Good-bye!'

He got into the cart, and Fenner's pony went rattling off down Pensand hill at a pace that astonished him.

CONSTANCE.

FAIRY Constance, open-eyed !
Fair-haired ripple of life's tide,
Seven years' fairy ! in what lays
Shall I write or sing your praise ?

Somewhat difficult, I find,
Is it to recall to mind
Rusty rhymes of other days,
Snatches of forgotten lays,
Tropes, and metaphors that, when
All my years were but twice ten,
Flowed as easily as flows
Guttural talk through parrot's nose.
Somewhat different, I see,
Through some misty years, to me
Look the dreams of younger days ;
How, then, shall I sing your praise ?

Angel edited below,
Complete in duodecimo !
Fairy phantom, elfin child,
Spirit of the ocean wild !
Airy goblin of the storm
Prisoned in a human form !
Tell me, Constance, what you were
In those realms of upper air ;
Whence you surely earthward came,
Changing ever, yet the same ;
Like the shine and shade that fly
O'er some landscape in the sky,
In the bosom of the blue,
When the stars are peeping through
Evening's west of silvery gray,
Ere the sun has fled away :
Where did then your footsteps range,
Constance, constant but in change ?

In and out, now here, now there,
Like a daytime vision fair ;
In and out, among the gloom
Of my dull and silent room,
Fairy Constance dances free,
Spraylike o'er a sullen sea ;
While, like beads of Circe's wine,
Her wild eyes sparkle, doze, and shine—

Liquid eyes of magic power,
Heavy, like a hanging flower.

Changing Constance, let me see
If by any simile
Pen and paper can express
Your artistic changefulness,
Showing how your nature is
Your name's complete antithesis.

Like a sunbeam on a stream ;
Like the passage of a dream ;
Like the varied witchery
Of wild music in the sky ;
Like the transient tints of red
When the sun has sunk to bed,
Or the still more transient gold
When the midnight mists unfold,
And the earliest streaks of morn
Tremble through the eastern dawn ;
Like the breath of summer breeze
Wandering through the lazy trees,
When the sleep of still July
Sings the loud blast's lullaby ;
Like the ripples of a lake
That on placid shingles break
In the lonely tropic hills ;
Like the noise of bubbling rills
Running down a valley-side ;
Like an autumn cornfield wide,
Waving in the waving wind ;
Like a thought within the mind,
Scarcely grasped yet partly known ;
Like a young bird newly flown ;
Like a flake of feathery snow ;
Like—what more I do not know.

So, my dear, I'll leave your praise
To some bard of later days ;
Younger eyes when I am old
Will watch each infant grace unfold,
See the budding tender shoot
Open, blossom, and bear fruit ;
Other hands when these are cold
Will write what now remains untold ;
Other hearts when mine is still
At your glances move and thrill ;
Other souls know hope and fear,
Young love's fancy, young love's tear——
What ! so late ? Good-night, my dear.

BRYAN CHARLES WALLER.

A SUPPER-PARTY AT PEKIN.

THERE is very little amusement to be found at Peking. For Europeans, above all, diversion of any kind is almost totally lacking; and on one occasion, in order to secure it, I had to transform myself into a Chinese for the night. The intense heat had led me to shave my head, after the fashion of the bonzes, so that the worst was over, and all that was necessary was to complete my toilette.

'Wang,' that was the name of my boy, 'bring me the trousers;' and Wang, silent as usual, helps me to plunge into a floating sea of silk. 'Wang, the sash;' and the sash is twisted round my waist, with the ends floating loose upon one of my hips. The leggings of sky-blue silk, fitting tight at the ankles, reach to the knees, and are kept up by ribbons fastened to the girdle. Over these come white-cotton socks, and beautiful boots of black velvet, embroidered with flying bats, with turned-up toes and pasteboard soles an inch and a half in thickness. A short shirt of white silk, reaching to the waist, comes next; and then the long transparent tunic ornamented with numerous dragons. Wang now smilingly gums a false pigtail, a yard long, on to my poor shaven crown. With a fan in my hand, and a pipe with tobacco-pouch thrust into my boots, I attain the height of Chinese elegance. A shagreen spectacle-case dangles from my topmost button, and the round glasses of the spectacles themselves placed astride my nose impart to me somewhat of the appearance of an owl. Altogether

the get-up is perfect; and if the skin of my head and neck is rather white for a Chinese, this will very likely pass unnoticed.

I raise my arms majestically, roll up my long full sleeves, and try to walk slowly and with measured steps. 'Imitate a duck,' says Wang. 'Ko ü' (That's it), I say to myself in order to keep up my courage. The effect of the costume is singular, for these silk stuffs are so light that one scarcely feels them upon one's body; and I seem to be clad only in a pair of boots, a pair of spectacles, and a false pigtail. There is all the same sensation of coolness and undress as on coming out of a bath.

The question now is how to get into a box measuring a yard each way and perched upon two wheels. With the aid of a bench, upon which I mount, and a good deal of pushing and pulling, I am at length squeezed into it. Wang and the driver perch themselves upon the shafts with their legs hanging down, and the vehicle starts.

My tortures now commence: my big spectacles will not keep on my nose, my false pigtail threatens to come off, and I all but smash the pipe in my boots. I try to flutter my fan; but a frightful jolt recalls to me the sad truth that, though disguised as a Chinese, I am wrong in fancying myself one in reality; that is, perfectly impassible, and devoid of all such things as nerves. I abuse my driver, who does not even deign to reply to the irritable stranger devoid of all urbanity. Jolting along, we reach one of the large

gates leading from the Tartar city into the Chinese city, whither I am bound. The mule keeps on at a trot; and as I clutch the two sides of the vehicle, I compare myself to a mouse being shaken in a trap.

We follow a lane running eastward. The distant sky is golden tinted from the setting sun; and the signs, sign-posts, and house-tops stand out sharply against the gilded background, which causes the natives, who are naturally yellow, to look still more jaundiced. Naked to the waist, the coolies and outdoor traders walk slowly along; a rich mandarin passes in a sedan; some fat tradesmen in front of their shops gaze at us as we pass with an indifferent air, and do not even turn their heads to find out whether I am a fair-skinned Chinese or a European in Chinese costume; a ragged beggar alone pursues me with his cries, 'Give me a "cash"! Have pity on me!' Some poor wretches half smothered in fetid filth are trying to clear out an open sewer that has evidently been neglected for an age. Heaps of foul refuse lie at every street-corner.

The sun sinks slowly, thunder rumbles in the distance, and clouds gather thickly overhead. The foot-passengers commence to hurry; the clerks, returning from their 'yamens' in groups of four and five, waddling and chatting with one another, hail drivers, who have suddenly become very exacting with regard to fares. The poorer people tuck up their trousers and take off their shoes, which would come to pieces in the wet. Another clap of thunder, and the rain pours down in torrents. The foot-passengers disappear. Pools of black-looking water fill up every hollow, an old brick-and-mud wall tumbles down. The water floods the miserable huts below the level

of the street. The place has become a desert, and my vehicle alone is left to make its way through a stream of mud. It is dark, the storm keeps increasing in violence, and the wet begins to come through the roof.

'Tao leao' (Here we are), says my servant, and not a moment too soon. He knocks at the door, which is opened by an old woman, and we are led through a couple of courtyards. I reach a reception room, and hear stifled laughter in the adjoining apartment, which is simply shut off by a curtain. What is this mystery?

A little Chinese girl enters, smiling, offers me tea, and deigns to take a cup in company with me, on the traditional Chinese sofa-table. It is the hour when, on fine evenings, grave individuals with long pigtailed may be seen traversing the gloomy lanes of the Chinese city in search of their ideal; therefore I am not particularly astonished at learning from the lips of my charming companion, Miss Perfumed Jade, that my intimate friend, Loutalou, the grave man of letters, known throughout the empire for the wonderful elegance with which he can illustrate a fan with a pretty landscape or a poetical autograph, is close by, in company with other grave *literati* and some ladies.

'Two chopsticks for Mr. Yon-li-pei' (my Chinese name), cries Loutalou, raising the curtain, and laughing. 'Ha, ha, ha! What good wind brings you here?' demands he.

'Tsou-fong' (The storm wind), I reply.

This little joke makes the *literati* smile, and establishes my reputation as a wit.

'Tching tsouo' (Be seated, we beg), they cry in chorus. 'Do us the honour of sharing with us our indifferent supper.'

'I dare not accept,' I politely reply.

'Pardon us,' continue they, 'for treating you in a manner unworthy of your great merit.'

'I do not dare, I do not dare,' I continue to urge.

Politeness being vindicated, after a farther slight resistance and a certain well-studied hesitation, I end by seating myself in the place of honour, protesting yet once again at the excessive attentions with which I am overwhelmed. The ladies sit down with us in spite of the rites. O Confucius, for this time be indulgent !

The repast was charming. What dishes, bowls, and plates there were ! Birds'-nest soup, sharks'-fin soup, chicken-broth, lapwings'-eggs soup, and countless other dishes, all cooked to perfection ; from the fish with sharp sauce to the apricot-kernel milk, and the sweet salad of young radish-tops. Loutalou offered me with his chop-sticks a piece of roast duck. I reciprocated the politeness by taking now from the dish, now from my plate, pieces of fowl or pork, and placing them on his. 'A preserved Canton orange for Miss Perfumed Jade,' a water chestnut for another lady ; for each guest, if he wishes to be polite, must pass half his time in heaping up his neighbours' plates with different kinds of food, and accepting, with many 'tching, tching,' or 'toug shie,' all that is offered him in return.

At the close of the repast, thanks to the champagne which I offered, and which is the only European wine that the inhabitants of the Celestial Empire appreciate, my friends became more noisy and talkative, and completely laid aside that decorum which they abandon with so much difficulty, above all in the presence of a stranger, my disguise being their excuse. Nap-

kins dipped in boiling water, and passed over the face after the repast to dissipate the fumes of the wine, served to calm them down a little.

Miss Perfumed Jade was graciously requested to sing. She took a guitar and at once commenced. The song was divided, like many others, into five parts, corresponding to the five watches of the night.

'At the first watch a young girl, unknown to her father and mother, leaves the house. But, alas, the moment is not well chosen, for her lover is not awaiting her at the trysting-place. In her needless haste to join him, her red shoes embroidered with flowers have got torn on the way.'

'Hao, hao ; good, very good ; what a voice, and what skill in the accompaniment !' we cried to encourage the charming musician, who continued as follows :

'During the whole of the second watch she looks and listens anxiously for her beloved. At length she hears his approaching footsteps, and soon his arm is around the young girl's little waist. Pacing up and down in loving unison, they exchange with each other words of tender endearment.'

Whether it was the effect of the champagne, of the hot Chinese wine, or of the passionate ditty, I know not, but the small eyes of the little Chinese girls became more brilliant than usual.

They idly stretched out their arms right and left to help themselves to sweetmeats and burnt almonds. Like little mice they only nibble, and this not overmuch. Leaning towards us they contemplate with a mocking smile the sentimental air that we have assumed, and at times their little eyes betray quite a languishing expression.

Miss Perfumed Jade, who had

paused merely to wet with champagne a couple of ruby lips that a Chinese poet would have likened to ripe cherries, now began the third verse :

‘ At the third watch the lovers sigh, for the time has at length arrived for them to part. He embraces her with rapturous passion, and she surrenders herself quite willingly to his caresses. Doubtful when they will be able to meet again, they feel very loth to separate, and seek to prolong the sweet maddening moments.’

At the conclusion of this verse the old servants bring opium-pipes and a supply of the drug itself, black and sticky like melted pitch, in little shells. The lamps, or rather the night-lights, with the pale and diminutive flame of which the opium is prepared, are lighted, and placed on little tables, on each side of which a smoker of one or the other sex stretches him or herself along the hard cushions of the couch, with a pillow placed under the neck. Miss Perfumed Jade resumes her song :

‘ At the fourth watch the young girl struggles gently to disengage herself, in order that she may leave ; while her lover tries all he can to detain her, saying, “ We have been so very happy ; ” to which she replies, “ Your little girl loves only you.”

‘ At the fifth watch she returns home, and hears her father and mother coughing, with no one to

attend upon them. She softly mounts the stairs, and, with her elbows on the sill of her bedroom window, turns her looks now towards the earth, now towards the sky. “ When the third moon of spring comes, he and I will meet again, and again be happy.”

I thank Miss Perfumed Jade for her charming song. The other ladies are preparing the pipes of the guests ; they dip a silver pin into the opium, broil this first coating in the flame of the lamp, shape it with their slender fingers, and continue to take up, broil, knead, and equalise each successive coating, until there is a sufficient quantity, when they introduce it by the aid of the pin into the little bowl of the pipe. The opium remains, and the pin being withdrawn leaves an opening for the smoke. The ladies take several whiffs, each time they light a new pipe, before holding it to the lips of the gentlemen, who gradually begin to doze off into a beatified and oblivious state.

The atmosphere heavy with opium-smoke, the supper, the champagne, my Chinese dress, the song, Miss Perfumed Jade sunk to sleep in her chair with her head resting on my shoulder, altogether completely trouble my ideas. I vaguely remember that I am a counterfeit Chinese ; and I fall asleep, dreaming of the little torn shoes, and of the love-making of this pair of Celestial turtle-doves.

WILD BABIES.

Some Pictures of Juvenile Life on the Fringe of Society.

A TOUCH of nature makes the whole world kin; so we have chosen a trite illustration of the truth of this statement, and venture to exhibit it by showing to our parents the manner in which certain savage people treat their

offspring, because a pleasant and envious notion is entertained here and in other civilised precincts that young Indians grow—just grow as Topsy thought she did. But it is not so: they have sore eyes and bad tempers; they wake

BRINGING THE BABY HOME—ALASKA.

up in the night with lusty yells and the colic; they have fits; they raise riots when cutting their teeth; and they are just as much petted and just as mischievous as our own.

The mothers of Pocahontas and Red Jacket worried over them with just as much earnestness as,

perhaps, did the maternal progenitors of Mrs. Hemans and George Washington, while quite as much paternal supervision was given doubtless to one as to the other. When the question of love and tenderness alone is mooted, then it should be said without hesitation that the baby born to-

day in the shadow and smoke of savage life is as carefully cherished as the little stranger that may appear here, simultaneously with it, amid all the surroundings of civilised wealth; and the difference between them does not commence to show itself until they have reached that age where the mind begins to feed and reason upon what it sees, hears, feels, and tastes; then the gulf yawns between our baby and the Indian's; the latter stands still, while the former is ever moving onward and upward.

The love of an Indian mother for her child is made plain to us by the care and labour which she often expends upon the cradle: the choicest production of her skill in grass and woollen weaving, the neatest needlework, and the richest bead embroidery that she can devise and bestow are lavished upon the quaint-looking cribs which savage mothers nurse and carry their little ones about in. This cradle, though varying in minor details with each tribe, is essentially the same thing, no matter where it is found, between the Indians of Alaska and those far to the south in Mexico. The Esquimaux are the exception, however; for they use no cradle whatever, carrying their infants snugly ensconced in the hoods to their parkies and otter-fur jumpers. The governing principle of a pappoose cradle is an unyielding board, upon which the baby can be firmly lashed at full length on its back. This board is usually covered by softly-dressed buckskin, with flaps and pouches in which to envelop the baby; other tribes, not rich or fortunate enough to procure this material, have recourse to a neat combination of shrub-wood poles, reed splints, grass matting, and the soft and fragrant ribbons of the bass- or linden-tree bark.

Sweet grass is used here as a bed for the youngster's tender back, or else clean dry moss plucked from the bended limbs of the swamp-firs; then with buckskin-thongs or cords of plaited grass the baby is bound down tight and secure, for any and all disposition that its mother may see fit to make of it for the next day or two.

Indian babies, as a rule, are not kept in their cradles more than twenty to twenty-four consecutive hours at any one time; they are usually unlimbered for an hour or two every day, and allowed to roll and tumble at will on a blanket, or in the grass or sand if the sun shines warm and bright. But this liberty is always conditional upon their good behaviour when free; for the moment a baby begins to fret or whimper, the mother places it back into its cradle, where it rests with emphasis, for it can there move nothing save its head; but so far from disliking these rigid couches, the babies actually sleep better in them than when free, and positively cry to be returned to them when neglected and left longer than usual at liberty. This fact is certainly an amusing instance of the force of habit.

When the pappoose is put away in its cradle, the mother has little or no more concern with it, other than to keep within sight or hearing. If she is engaged about the wigwam or in the village, she stands it up in the lodge-corner, or hangs it to some convenient tree, taking it down at irregular intervals to nurse. When she retires at night, the baby is brought and suspended at some point within easy reach; if the baby is ill, it is kept at her side, or she sits up all night with it in the most orthodox fashion. When the women leave the village on any errand, such as going to the

mountains for berries, or to the river cañon for fish, the cradles with the babies therein are slung upon the mothers' backs, and carried, no matter how far, how rough the road, or how dismal the weather.

The writer in 1870 was taking

a short cut over the country near old Fort Casper, on the Platte, when he paused to kneel and drink at a clear little stream as he crossed. Suddenly his attention was arrested by a succession of queer, cooing, snuffling sounds that caused him to peer curiously

SIoux BABIES AMUSING THEMSELVES.

about into the recesses of the surrounding birch and poplar-thicket, where he discovered to the right, and just above him, five papposes slung to the trees, all alone in their glory, amusing themselves by winking and staring at one another, apparently as happy as clams at high water; but, unfortunately for their seren-

ity, they caught sight of the pale-face, and with one accord they began to howl in dismal and terrified accents, so that in less than a minute six or seven squaws came crashing through the under brush to the rescue. Happy mothers! it was not, as they feared, a bear, and the tempest was quelled at once.

Indian babies are born subject to all the ills that baby-flesh is heir to, but with this great difference between them and ours—when sick they are either killed or cured without delay. This does not happen, however, from sinister motives; it is not done to avoid the irksome care of a sickly puny child; it is not the result of lack of natural love for offspring—not any or all of these;

it is due to their wonderful 'medicine,' their fearful system of incantation.

A pappoose becomes ill; it refuses to eat or to be comforted; and after several days and nights of anxious tender endeavour to relieve her child, the mother begins to fear the worst, and, growing thoroughly alarmed, she at last sends for the 'shaman,' or a doctress of the tribe, and surrend-

CHARMING A CURE.

ers her babe to his or her merciless hands. This shaman at once sets up over the wretched youngster a steady howling, and then anon a whispering conjuration, shaking a hideous rattle or burning wisps of grass around the cradle. This is kept up night and day until the baby rallies or dies, one doctor relieving the other until the end is attained, and that result is death nine times out of ten.

Disease is not viewed by an

Indian as we regard it. With him it is not a simple physiological disorder, with lymphatic or sanguine vitiation of the system; it is no such thing to his mind. He sees in a sick person the form of one who is stricken down by the lodgment therein of a devil or bad spirit; and the only way to restore the patient to health is to scare this devil, terrify this demon, out of the body of the sick back again into the thin air from whence

it came ; and to do this, these infernal practices are resorted to of dancing around the sick and dragging them about, yelling and frothing at the mouth, and making hideous noises with calabashes and rattles day and night without a moment's intermission, until the

poor sufferer, in sheer desperation, usually seeks refuge in death.

If the shamans, or medicine-men, fail to kill a patient in the regular course of their practice, they are warmly congratulated by the relatives and the whole village for their success in browbeat-

WHAT THE BOYS DO.

ing and driving out the lurking devil that afflicted him. Still more strange, however, when the sick die under this peculiar treatment, there is no reproach uttered, no hint as to the least desire to change doctors when the next case comes along ; but, on the contrary, the shamans are the recipients of even

heartier congratulation than when a cure supervenes, as they are gravely and humbly complimented for their wonderful courage in attacking and facing so powerful and wicked an evil genius as the one must have been which succeeded in taking the life of the sick man, in spite of the doctor's

terrible adjurations and noisy incantation.

The effect of this understanding among Indians is to leave no babies in their villages over four or five years of age which are not perfectly sound and tough, with the exception of those youngsters who, though apparently strong, have the seeds implanted of bronchial and pulmonary disease; for consumption is notably the great scourge of Indian youth. When left to themselves, they know

nothing of measles, scarlet fever, whooping-cough, but they have the mumps; they have several low intermittent fevers; they have bad colds and hacking coughs; and, worse than all, they are very scrofulous, and suffer greatly from aggravated eruptions of the skin. But if there are any germs of disease in the air of an Indian encampment, such as our children are usually waylaid with in early life, the pappoose is promptly brought down with it, and suffers

WHAT THE GIRLS DO—SEONA MAIDS ON THE TIMBER TRAIL PACKING FIREWOOD.

like our little ones, only in the case of measles, unless the weather be very warm and fine, the result is almost always fatal; for the idea of guarding against sudden draughts and changes of temperature is something that an Indian mother cannot entertain, much less do, even to save her baby, which she loves as she loves her own life.

When the pappoose has rounded its second year of existence, it leaves the cradle and begins to chew meat and salmon; it runs

about the village for the next ten or twelve years without a scrap of clothing during the summer, if a boy, and provided with a corner of a blanket to wrap around itself in winter; if it be a girl, it is clad in a short leather dress, the arms and legs bare. A marked difference in treatment of the two sexes begins also at a very early age. The boys literally run wild; they are not asked to do anything, and they are never punished for the rankest insubordination; but the girls fall into line behind

their mothers as soon as they can carry a five-pound weight, and become hewers of wood and drawers of water before they enter their teens: industry and submission is the lesson they are thoroughly taught, while the very opposite is held out to the boys, and gloried in by them. In swift compliance with such teaching the boys become harsh and cruel to their mothers and disobedient and impudent to their fathers; but the old warriors and women of

the tribe delight in it, and the more obstreperous and impudent the young buck is, the greater the man he is to be, as they say. Indeed, the extent to which it is carried in some tribes may be faintly appreciated by the relation of an incident that came under our observation.

An old Shoshone chief happened to pass between two squads of little urchins of the tribe who were playing, and in passing he chanced to intercept and stop

LITTLE SNAKES PLAYING IN THE WATER.

the flight of a ball which a lively young buck was driving with all his might and main; this boy ran out of the crowd and up to the warrior, where he hauled off and hit that person a lusty blow over the loins with the shinny club in his hands, and as the old chief sharply and savagely turned round, the audacious young Snake spat in his face! What then? Why, the warrior father, fearing that his son might be scared by the sight of his uncontrollably angry face, quickly drew

up his blanket over it, and moved away without a word!

A somewhat comical characteristic of Indian children is the excessively protuberant abdomen and the thin legs and arms; a fat chunky boy or girl is a rare sight among these people. Though the boys haunt the streams and lake beaches throughout the spring, summer, and autumn, swimming therein like ducks, and as often as beavers, yet they always appear begrimed, oily, and dirty; they never have any trouble with their

hair, and it matters little to them or their friends whether the frowzy top-knot is ever combed, parted in the middle or at the side, or parted at all; they troop about the village, now rollicking, now cowering, like so many monkeys. The eyes of an average Indian boy are small and black; they are prominent, without visible eye-brows; large eyes are despised, because it is claimed that they are weak and timid; therefore a hand-

some boy must have small jetty optics, large mouth full of stout teeth, and a deep chest; while the handsomest girl is the strongest one of her age.

The pappoose, after being weaned, for the next five or six years keeps about his mother, or abuses an older sister if he has one; he pays earnest and prompt attention to meals, and is seldom seen without something in his mouth; he rolls contentedly in

GETTING OLD ENOUGH TO BE USEFUL.

the ashes of the fire, and spends hour after hour during these tender years in roasting over the coals little strips of meat or fish impaled on twigs or forked sticks; he becomes early known to all the dogs in the village, and attaches himself to some favourite one or two of them, which receive all the fresh bones and other dainty morsels that he has to spare from day to day. Gradually his spider-like arms and legs grow stronger, and he begins to essay murder

with the bow and arrow, and to imitate the strut of the warriors as they stalk from lodge to lodge; he rolls himself up to sleep every night in the snuggest and most convenient place he can find in the 'tepee,' either at the feet of his parents or coiled up with his relatives.

The pappoose finds his own play-things, as a rule, though his father occasionally unbends far enough to fashion his first bow and arrow. He delights in playing ball, but

not in catching it, as our boys do. It is usually a game similar to 'shinny' when played by the little Indians. He delights also in setting small snares for grouse, rabbits, and water-fowl, and takes real honest boyish satisfaction in robbing birds'-nests; but when the berry-season arrives, then is he happiest, and his cup of content runs over. The slender nether limbs are fairly bowed and groggy beneath the fruit-distended abdomen. As the boys are never subjected to bearing of burdens, and hardly ever put upon their feet before they are two years old, the sight of bowed or knock-kneed legs among them is very rare indeed; but the practice of setting the young girls at the duty, mornings and evenings, of bringing packs of wood and water, causes nearly all of them to be inclined either out or in at the knees.

The state of communism in which Indians live generally permits no privileged class among them, and the girls of the chief walk in single file along the wood-trail under just as heavy burdens as are carried by the daughters of the others who have no rank or standing whatever in the village. Liberty, equality, and fraternity among the children are a patent fact. There are no heartburnings caused by wealth here or high public position. The boys are never known to have quarrelled among themselves because the father of one was richer than the father of the other; and the little girls never attempt or think of queen-ing it over one another on the strength of better dresses and their

mother's carriage. There are no rivalries of this kind among Indian children until they assume the *toga virilis*; but they have jealousies and malicious promptings which culminate in blows and taunts that spring out of their childish games; for they play at bat and football, at hide-and-seek, at tag, and have several outdoor pastimes not unlike blind-man's-buff and hunt-the-slipper. Indian boys do not know any-

SIOUX BABY EN ROUTE—HEAD WATERS
OF THE FRAZER.

thing about marbles; they have no game at all like it, though they might have with great propriety, for the wear and tear to which our boys' trousers are subjected in the season of this sport would never give an Indian mother a moment's concern, because her boys never wear trousers. They fly little kites, however, made out of fish-bladders or air-sacs, and they spin teetotums on flat polished

stones; but the delightful mysteries of humming-top they have yet to investigate. The girls, however, do not participate much in these sports, since they become coy little old women at a very early age, and when not on the water-, fish-, and wood-paths, they are usually busily employed in helping their mothers gather mast

Allusion has been made to the love which Indian boys have for the water, and yet, paradoxical as it may seem, still it is true that they are never clean, owing to the habit which they have of rubbing the marrow-bone oil and fish-grease over their faces, bodies, limbs, and hair at the conclusion of every meal and between meals, so that the cool and even tepid stream-water does not tend to remove it in the least, except in spots; on the contrary, the effect of bathing seems to be to set the dirt all the more firmly on their begrimed forms. When it does come off, it comes off in scales.

As a rule, Indian children are light-hearted and cheerful, rippling with laughter and mischievous mirth; for they play sly tricks upon the dogs and one another incessantly. They are much given to singing, copying, of course, from the songs of their elders; but this feature is a rather dreary one, as the chant is always dolorous, though the time is kept well, and usually emphasised by a baton beat upon a log or a rude drum.

The fact that the Esquimaux babies are not managed at all like the

tender young Indian savages is rather peculiar; but the youngster is carried in its mother's hood instead, until it is old and strong enough to walk, then it is incased in a complete suit, consisting of a parky, breeches, and boots, in exact imitation of the dress of its father or mother, as the case of its sex may be. Then, too, this Indian discrimination in

KUTCHIN MOTHER AND BABY.

and dry berries and roots, scraping, tanning, and sewing skins, raveling sinews, &c. The industry of Indian women is really remarkable; they are always at work, from the oldest to the youngest, making in this manner a wonderful contrast between the laborious diligence of an Indian girl and the magnificent loafing of an Indian boy.

favour of the boys is not recognised by them, for both sexes have an equal share of labour to perform as soon as they are able to do it.

The Esquimaux baby, being housed up with its parents many long months of each year owing to the severity of climate of its country, is provided with toys made by its indulgent parents, who fashion with considerable skill neat little images of bears, foxes, seals, and birds out of walrus-ivory and bone; tiny sleds, spears, bows and arrows, and little kyacks are added to the list, with dolls for the girls, until the child is fully endowed with almost everything in miniature that the simple surroundings of the hard life of its ancestors can suggest. Very little parental discipline is enforced, but occasionally a mother loses her patience, and tosses a naked young-

ster out from the hut into the snow or keen driving wind, where it is speedily reduced to abject submission, and when only too glad to behave, it is permitted to return to the sheltering 'igloo.'

The Indian ma-

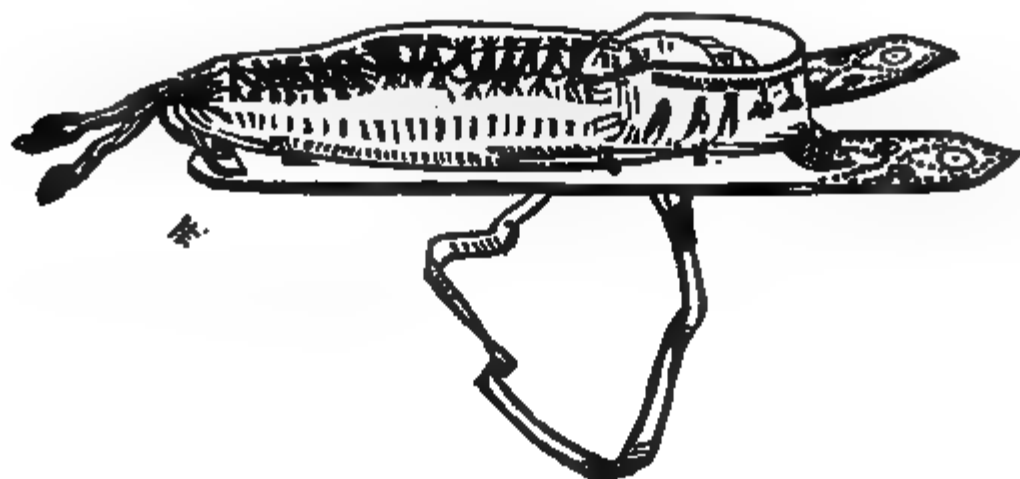
FLATHEAD BABY UNDER PRESSURE.

tones. Sometimes these lullabies are neat and pretty little compositions, but the song is usually a vague unmeaning refrain, or else a single idea repeated over and over; sometimes the mother apostrophises her son in a song by which she prophesies its future as an exceptionally brilliant one. She tells him that his little legs are to become in the fulness of time as strong as big pine-trees,

that his tiny arms are to grow into muscles more powerful than those of a huge grizzly bear, that he is never to fail in the chase, and that he is going to be good to his old mother when she shall become senile and helpless.

The vagaries of caprice or fashion among Indians in regard to naming their babies are numerous ;

but the mothers are never worried over the trouble presented often to ourselves, where our baby has two or three rich relatives or Lilly-vicks, and it becomes necessary to adroitly choose the name of the right one for that baby—the one that will come down with the cash expectant : nothing of this kind bothers the mind of the savage



COMANCHE CRADLE.

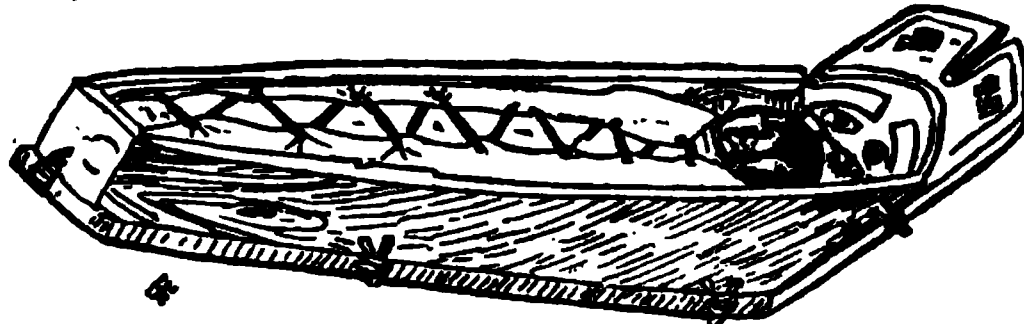
mother ; but immediately at its birth she names it after some animal, flower, or other thing, or a remarkable event, and all sorts of occurrences. There is no christening party then or thereafter, and in a few years at the longest the mother herself forgets the day and date of her baby's birth, while the child itself never knows it—never

knew it. There is not one middle-aged or adult Indian in ten thousand, if there is one at all among the uncultivated, who can tell his exact age.

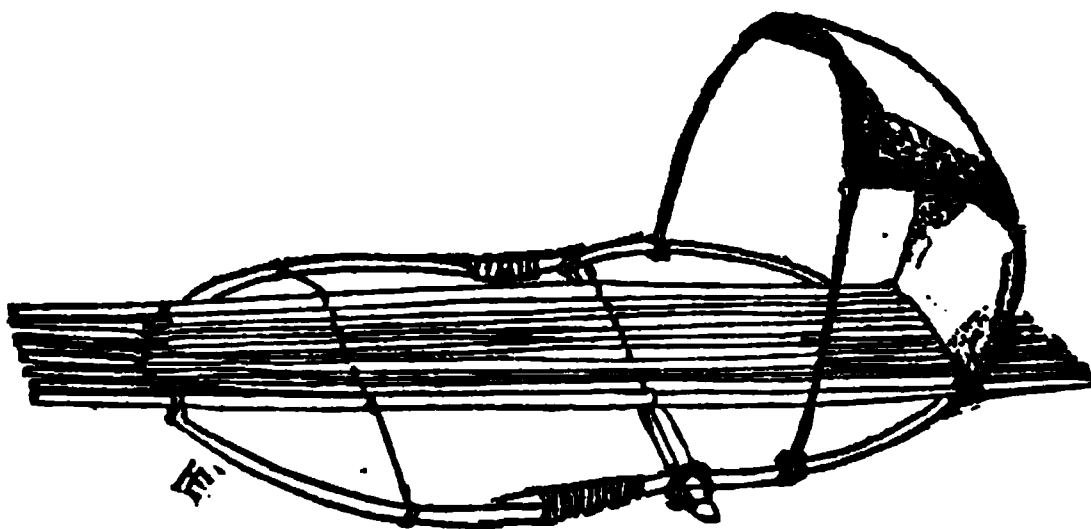
Why should they keep the record ? They have no legal questions among themselves as to the time of puberty or right of inheritance. The reply of an aged

Wastonquah doctor to the writer when questioned on this point sums it up pithily and Indian-like: 'When we are young we do

not care how old we are, and when we are old we do not care to know.'



BELLA BELLA BOARD CRADLE.



SUMMER CRADLE.

PAINTED BY WATTEAU.

‘PAINTED by Watteau’—so the legend runs
About the quaint gilt frame. ‘And painted well,’
I murmur; for the tenderest of suns
Shines softly in upon a forest dell,
Where, robed in silken sheen and satin floss,
Ladies of fashion tread the golden moss.

While gentlemen, our great-grandfathers, trip
With crook in hand beside a crystal stream.
Sure never sweeter smile moved human lip.
The poet says, ‘Things are not what they seem.’
Perhaps they *were* not, then. Perhaps that grace
Was only in the figure and the face,

Leaving the heart a false and foolish void.
Perhaps they felt not that the grass was green,
And that the flower, wherewith the white hand toyed,
Shone with the silent speech of the Unseen.
Perhaps that woman’s heart was hard and cold;
Perhaps the man that wooed her wooed her gold.

Past painter’s name and picture, I look out
Through the lawn window, where the shadows pass
So swiftly, and each shadow with a shout
Of sweet girl-laughter from the trampled grass.
Ah, Watteau, thou art dim for all thy sun;
The world is wiser, and thy day is done.

Look at her there, the daughter of the house,
Slim as a lily, fair as flowers are fair.
And look at him, the lord of leagues of grouse,
Stalwart as Galahad, and as debonair.
No rouge or powder, wreath or ribboned crook
Mock the glad morning light by lawn and brook.

Come, paint them as they stand—her tumbled hair,
Flushed cheek, and laughing eyes of clearest blue;
He bronzed and bearded. Hang the picture there,
And say which is the nobler of the two—
Those old-world maidens with their shepherds gay,
Or these, the man and woman of our day.

MAKING AN INDEX.

AMONG 'popular errors' as yet unexploded must be ranked the widely spread fallacy that any one can make an index. But for a few notable exceptions, index-making would seem to have become in modern times a forsaken, if not a lost, art. Sterling and efficient work in this important branch of literature is now seldom found, and for many years the office of index-maker has fallen into low esteem and almost disrepute. It may be said that the chief responsibility for the neglect of such a useful and time-saving craft lies entirely with authors and publishers; authors being too busy or too indifferent to undertake the task of indexing their own books—occasionally, by the bye, they are incapable of it—and the remuneration given for such work is generally so mean, that competent men will only engage in it as a resource from impecuniosity. There is little doubt that index-making in its higher phase involves not only familiarity with the subject treated, but also the possession of a certain faculty of analysis, and the ability to grasp clearly the salient points and features of the work to be indexed. It is these qualities that are so often lacking in the indexes of the present time. In many cases they are mere alphabetical lists of proper names, and any reference to the unfortunate author's opinions or arguments seems to be carefully avoided, as such reference would necessitate study and thought. The unhappy student, who is obliged to consult works cursed

with such indexes, often finds himself compelled to wade through a mass of matter utterly useless to him in order to discover something he should have been able to light upon at once by means of the index.

Literary men are fast awakening to the need of reform in this matter, and one of the outcomes of this awakening is the lately formed 'Index Society,' which, although its prime object is to issue accurate and full indexes to standard works at present without them, also proposes to undertake the compilation of good and thorough indexes to new books. The preliminary publication of this society, entitled *What is an Index?** by Mr. Henry B. Wheatley, Honorary Secretary, has recently been published. In a stout octavo pamphlet of some hundred pages, Mr. Wheatley gives a well-arranged monograph on the mysteries of indexing. In it will be found, interspersed with much sound counsel, many amusing and interesting anecdotes concerning this subject. It is curious, in these days of the making of many books, to be told that it should ever have been thought necessary to raise a warning voice against indexes, lest they should encourage sciolism, and a general superficiality of learning. Thus we find John Glanville, in his *Vanity of Dogmatizing*, saying, 'Methinks 'tis a pitiful piece of knowledge that can be learnt from an index, and a poor ambition to

* *What is an Index? a few Notes on Indexes and Indexers.* By Henry B. Wheatley, F.S.A. (Sotheran & Co.)

be rich in the inventory of another's treasury ;' and even Dr. Isaac Watts, of pious memory, alludes censoriously to those whose 'learning reaches no farther than the tables of contents.' Thomas Fuller, Mr. Wheatley tells us, was a true index-connoisseur, and in his *Pisgah Sight of Palestine* he gives necessary directions for the use of the index, where he says, 'An index is the bag and baggage of a book—of more use than honour; even such who seemingly slight it, secretly using it, if not for need for speed of what they desire to find.' Many have been the excuses put forth by parsimonious publishers or indolent authors for the omission of indexes, but probably that of S. Speed, the publisher of Howell's *Discourse concerning the Precedency of Kings* (1664), is as plausible as any: 'The Bookseller to the Reader. The reason why there is no table or index added hereunto is that every page in this work is so full of signal remarks that were they couched in an index it would make a volume as big as the book, and so make the postern-gate to bear no proportion to the building.'

An index is seldom turned to for simple amusement, or as the most interesting and easiest-read portion of a book, but in *What is an Index?* are to be found several such instances. The index to Prynne's *Histrio-Mastix* (1633) is very readable, although, according to Carlyle, the *Histrio-Mastix* itself is 'never more to be read by mortal.' The following are some of the entries concerning plays and players extracted by Mr. Wheatley from the index to this work:

'Æschylus, one of the first inventors of tragedies; his strange and sudden death.
Impudency, a dangerous sin occasioned by stage-plays.

Lyes condemned—frequent in plays.
Crossing of the face when men go to plays shuts in the devil.
Heaven—no stage-plays there.'

At a later date, among humorous indexes, that of Steele's to the *Tatler* stands very high. Leigh Hunt, in one of the articles in his *Indicator*, is enthusiastic in his praise of it. Mr. Wheatley gives a few specimens from it; for instance:

'Vol. I.

Bachelor's scheme to govern a wife.
Knaves proved fools.

Vol. II.

Dead men, who.
Dead persons heard, judged, and sentenced.
Love-letters before and after marriage, found in a grave.
Mathematical sieve to sift impertinences in writing and discourse.

Vol. IV.

Blockheads apt to admire one another.'

To return to the proposed labours of the Index Society. Its founders have another object in view not yet mentioned by us. This is nothing less than the accumulation of materials for a Universal Reference Index that shall eventually include everything, and will be constantly growing in size and utility. This is an enormous task to undertake, and may be regarded by many as an impossibility; but, as Mr. Wheatley shrewdly remarks, few people ever realise the simplicity and usefulness of the alphabet. 'Everything, however disconnected, would be placed in the General Index, and much that would otherwise be lost would there find a resting-place.'

The Society appears to have made a good start, and already numbers nearly two hundred members. Its aims are so catholic that it appeals to every class of literary workers, and, should it be able to carry out its intention, it ought to become one of the most useful of the learned societies.

A. G. H.

ON THE ADVANTAGES OF AN OCCASIONAL DAY IN BED.

It has happened to every one of us in our time to be compelled to spend an occasional day in bed. A man of a statistical frame of mind once made the calculation that the civilised human being spends on an average ten days of his life in bed. You are not exactly ill, but you are out of sorts. You are fretful and anxious. Man delights you not, nor woman either. You develop a tendency to be an ogre in private life. Perhaps you do not greatly care about sending for a doctor. For the doctor either charges you, or he does not charge. In the first place, you are not quite sure when he will leave off charging you. In the next place, you are painfully aware that you are accumulating a vast load of obligation. At any rate he eventually comes to see you. You think, and very justly, if you do not have him to see you, you will probably have reason to regret it. He comes, and he passes upon you the delicious sentence that you must pass a day or two in bed. At the present day, doctors have a great tendency to make their prescriptions nice, and this is one of the nicest of prescriptions. He will probably carry out the idea by recommending to you the wing of a chicken, and a glass of sparkling wine. He considers that the general tone of your system requires strengthening. That doctor becomes justly popular among all the old ladies of both sexes. You might have known indeed, by the mere light of reason, that

a day in bed was just the thing to meet your mental, moral, and physical necessities. But the human mind has a natural tendency to rest upon authority. When you have the leisure time in bed, study that great man, George Cornwall Lewis—who thought that life would be very tolerable but for its amusements—on the *Influence of Authority in Matters of Opinion*. The doctor is the great modern authority. He has superseded the father confessor. His opinion is especially authoritative when it happens to coincide with your own.

How still and quiet it all is, as you thus lie in bed. All the shocks and stirs of life are laid to rest. The sweet sense of restfulness and quiet steals over one. Generally there is a certain kind of rush and anxiety about breakfast-time; a very great mistake, for breakfast ought to be a luxurious time. You must finish your letters and papers at a particular moment. You must be at your business at a particular time. There is all the friction and confusion of cab, omnibus, railway, or steamer. It is such a comfort, as you turn your head peacefully on your pillow, to think that you are liberated from all this. You have the window partly opened; you see the pure clear skies; you hear the rustling breeze, the quivering foliage, the early song of birds. It is so unusual that you lie in bed, that there is a perceptible effect upon your household. There is silence, or only the soft

touch and tread. All your surroundings get into sympathy with you. The thought occurs to you that there are many things which have been reserved for such leisure hours as these. There are still just a few people who write long letters; and these long letters, one or two perhaps from India or Africa, ought to be re-read and pondered. There is the novel or poem or biography which you have so wished to read. There are back numbers of the *Times*, which you had only glanced at, but which contain matters worthy of study. Perhaps, however, it will be wiser not to do anything at all. Anyhow, you spend this present time just as you like, and with a clear conscience. Those 'who can afford to keep a conscience' know what a terrible tyrant that same conscience can be. If we are only enjoying ourselves when we ought to be doing some irksome duty, all our enjoyment is marred. But now you read and think in the possession of your full privilege. Those exquisite lines of Shakespeare's sonnet,

'When in the sessions of sweet silent thought
summon up remembrance of the past,'

seem exactly meant for these musings in bed. You also wonderfully succeed in banishing the business and distraction of life. Business either is done, or is left undone, or does itself. You are resolved that it shall do itself. It is just possible that it may do itself better than you can do it. It is a wholesome discovery that the world can get on without you, and that you are not the one necessary person whom you imagined yourself to be. Moreover, there are many good people who think—and can give good reason to themselves for so thinking—that if they cannot attend

to their own affairs, these will be ordered for them. 'Does God exact day labour, light denied?' they ask with the blind poet. Whether they are right in these thoughts or not, whether they are fatalistic or otherwise, may be a question; but these thoughts have been the strength of men's hearts, have made the strength of the strongest men, and have added to their serenity and sense of security when they have been forced to 'give up,' and creep wearily into their beds.

Taking an occasional day in bed, simply on account of indisposition, is, however, a very simple and rudimentary notion of this glorious institution. Bed is the natural domicile of every man:

'In bed we laugh, in bed we cry;
And born in bed, in bed we die.'

Bavard, the French physiologist maintained that man is an animal who exercises the thinking faculty best in a horizontal position. Thus there are high artistic, social, and intellectual uses connected with the occasional day in bed which imperatively claim discussion. Brindley, the great engineer, when he was fairly bothered and puzzled by some tough problem, always betook himself to bed until he had solved it. Most people have a great kindness for Lord Melbourne, who, under the affectation of frivolity, used to get up Hebrew and the Fathers, and imperturbable good-humour to bear with his wife, Lady Caroline, while the pretty Byron-struck termagant used to smash the drawing-room furniture. His intimate friends would find the Premier calmly taking breakfast in bed, with letters and despatches strewn all over the counterpane. The poets have been terrible fellows to get out of bed. I suppose it is because the visions of the day and of the night sweetly inter-

minge. The poet Thomson cultivated laziness as a fine art, and thought out his poems in bed. Pope was a still worse fellow. When he had a fit of inspiration on him, he would keep the servants running about for him all through the night. He made amends to them by the plenteousness of his 'vails.' We take a later instance. Bismarck says, according to Dr. Busch, 'I was troubled with varicose veins in 1866. I lay full length on the bed, and had to answer letters of a very desperate sort with a pencil.' He has given us some of his experiences when lying in bed. 'I used to lie awake full of all sorts of thoughts and troubles. Then Varzin would suddenly come up before me, perfectly distinct in the minutest particulars, like a great picture with even all its colours fresh—the green trees, the sunshine on the stems, the blue sky above. I saw every individual there. I struggled to shake the thing off; and when at last I ceased to see it, other things came in—reports, notes, despatches, and so on; but I fell over about morning.' Bismarck at Versailles used to lie in bed a great deal, 'because he cannot keep himself reasonably warm in any other way.' I sympathise with Bismarck. Accept, Prince, the marks of my most distinguished consideration.

There are certain occasions when it becomes highly convenient to stay in bed. Indisposition is a valid excuse for not keeping a great number of disagreeable engagements. Thackeray makes my Lord Farintosh have a toothache when he does not care to dine with a branch of that highly respectable family, the Newcomes. Macaulay says that Lord Chatham made it convenient to have the gout when he did not care to

attend Parliament. A great many people indulge in a twinge of aristocratic gout, when the supposed twinge will save them from something which they do not like. Obviously, if a man ought to be in bed, he ought not to be anywhere else. And bed is such an excuse for non-attendance as a witness or juror on a disagreeable trial, or attending some party where you would much rather not go, or when a man does not want to go to church. I am afraid there is a regular 'church attack' to which many people are liable. I have no doubt that there is a body of medical statistics to show that the human frame is liable to a chance distemper, compelling the unhappy patient to lie in bed in the morning, an indisposition that regularly occurs every Sunday. I do not for a moment say that all this is sheer sham and hypocrisy. But when things are very nicely balanced, when you are not quite sure whether you will stay in bed or not, when you feel that you would like to do so and at the same time have the disagreeable duty impression that you ought to get up, then a very slight circumstance settles the matter, and persuades you that on the whole it is your proper course to lie in bed.

I remember once arguing with an ingenious (not ingenuous) youth, who used frequently to cut the lectures of his professor at a northern university. His formula of excuse always was that he was 'absent from indisposition.' As my young friend was in the perfection of high health, I ventured to remonstrate with him on this species of insincerity. The youth had a highly logical mind, and met me this way: 'Indisposition was absent from me; *ergo*, I was absent from indisposition.' The youth, driven from this subterfuge

by the demand for a medical certificate, took to killing off his people on a large scale. He certainly could not attend if he were mourning the sudden demise of a cousin or an aunt. 'What!' said Lushington—it was the Lushington commemorated by Tennyson and Thackeray—with a twinkling glance of pity, 'are not all your relations dead yet, Mr. B.?'

Let us analyse this lying in bed a little further. I maintain that, in the mere fact of lying in bed, there is something healthy and recuperative to the system. The wheels of life are oiled and eased. The proper and legitimate purpose of stopping in bed is to go to sleep. There is nothing like sleep. There is no tonic or medicine in the whole world like sleep. The more sleep the brain gets, the better does the brain work. All great brain-workers have been great sleepers. Sir Walter Scott could never do with less than ten hours. A fool may want eight hours, as George III. said, but a philosopher wants nine. The men who have been the greatest generals are the men who could sleep at will. Thus it was with both Wellington and Napoleon. The greatest speakers in the House of Commons have been the men who can go to sleep there as much as they like. This explained the juvenility of the aged Palmerston. There is a man who has been Attorney-General, whom I have seen bury his face in his hands over his desk, and sleep soundly until his own cause should come on. 'Sleep,' says the Greek proverb, 'is the medicine for every disease.' 'If he sleep, he will do well.' A friend told me that he treated himself for a fever. He went to bed with a large pitcher of lemonade by his side. He drank and slept, slept and drank, till he drank and slept himself

well again. When you take to your bed, get all the sleep you can out of your bedstead, even although, to quote Dick Swiveller's saying, you have to pay for a double-bedded room, confessing that you have taken a most unreasonable amount of sleep out of a single bed. You will be banking a whole store of recuperative energy. Even if you cannot sleep, still keep to your bed. There is no more pestilent heresy than that you should get up directly you are awake. If it is the early riser who catches the worm, the worm is a great idiot in rising still earlier in order to be caught. If you do not get sleep by lying in bed, you get rest. You secure the fallow ground which will hereafter produce a good harvest. Sleep is of course the proper employment for bed; but if you don't sleep, you can lie still and read. I don't believe that the man who gets up really learns or does more than the man who lies in bed. If, for a moment, the writer may be egotistical, some of the hardest work which he has ever done has been from the early dawn till after a breakfast in bed. Of all sleep in the world there is none so good as what you get, in the way of treasure-trove, after the usual time of waking, when, in point of fact, you have given up the expectation of getting any more sleep. As for 'being called,' as the saying goes, that is simply a relic of the barbarism of our ancestors. I should quarrel with any man who presumed 'to call' me. One of the main beauties of an occasional day in bed is that you get an extra stock of sleep, which goes to the credit side of your sanitary account.

It is just possible that some of these remarks may require a little qualifying and explaining. A writer has often to guard against

the extreme literality of many honest people. He has always to make allowance, first for his own density, and then for the density of his friends. He must be allowed to remark that he does not indorse the conduct of those who habitually fold their hands for a little more sleep and slumber. It will be perceived that we plead for the advantages of an 'occasional day in bed,' not for the habit. I have known several cases where people have gone to bed in consequence of illness, and have been so delighted with their residence in Bedfordshire then, that they have persistently refused to get up again. Lying in bed thinking—that is, thinking that you think—has been described as being as bad as dram-drinking. I take it for granted that, in resolving to lie in bed, you are pursuing a deliberate and intelligent course, really carrying out a line of action, or rather a line of inaction, as morally and medically useful. You have laid down your programme and you conscientiously adhere to it.

Then there is another advantage connected with an occasional day in bed. You see more of your family and of your friends, and you also see your friends in a more intimate kind of way. That must be a very good sort of fellow who hears that you are confined to your room and comes over to talk with you. Your people tell him, with a half smile, that you are not so very bad after all, and would he like to go up-stairs. Or the sick man, finding that his friends have come to see him, suddenly thinks himself a great deal better, and comes down-stairs to see them. All the unfavourable symptoms miraculously disappear when he finds that he does not want to stop in bed any longer. Anyhow, it is a very pleasant

attention of Jones to drop in thus unconventionally; and a glass of the very old port, especially recommended by that enlightened physician to whom we alluded, will be beneficial both to visitor and patient. You exchange gossip and political ideas, and discuss imperialism and our foreign policy. You will not get on the worse with brother Jones in your social and business relations, because on the occasion of your day in bed you have thrown open your *vie intime* to him.

There is just one drawback: your next-door neighbour, Mrs. Grundy, will be keenly discussing your position. She hears you are ill, and she will be telling your friends that you have made your last dying speech and confession. The old lady will have observed with great regret that you have not been looking well for a long time. You are evidently breaking up. What else could have been expected from a man of your carelessness and irregular habits? She understands that the doctors have long given you over. She probably inquires into your property and insurances, and wonders how you leave your family provided for. This kind of remark may perhaps be a drawback to your day in bed; but it is not worth while to lay any stress upon it. The next day you surprise her by coming out as fresh as paint, and with a flower in your buttonhole. She will think that there is evidently a mystery about you which is not at all to your credit.

Yet a time will come when our dear friend, Mrs. Grundy, will not be so very far out after all. A day in bed may be a very serious day, and a precursor of many other very serious days in bed. One advantage of the occasional happy day in bed will be, that it is a sort of preparation and re-

hearsal for the sadder days that are the lot of our poor humanity. We may get suggestive hints of faith and courage, of patience and calmness, as we lie peacefully and thankfully in bed, thinking perchance of the narrow bed at last. Those are sweet words of the great Hebrew singer: 'Have I not remembered Thee in my bed, and thought upon Thee when I was

waking? Because Thou hast been my helper, therefore under the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice.' That will not be the least advantage of a sojourn in bed if we are reminded of such a protection and such a consolation:

'Say not good-night; but in a happier
clime
Wish me good-morning.'

ARE YOU AN AUTHOR?

You hesitate to answer ; because, if not already an author, you feel quite certain that it only depends upon yourself to become one—ay, and that a successful one.

Everybody who is anybody can read ; and everybody who can read thinks that he can write, until he tries. Why would not the Parisian shopkeeper believe that Scribe, the dramatist, had made three millions of francs with his pen ? Why ? ‘Because if Scribe had really done so, everybody else would do the same.’

The vulgar idea of authorship is that you have only to sit down before a few blank sheets of paper, scribble something thereon, and the thing is done. It is supposed to be as easy as talking. The talkers know that they can talk ; and what is writing, they think, but the permanent fixing of talk in written or printed characters ? It is just the reverse process of reading aloud, and of course just as easy. One thing they do not know, or forget, namely, that many clever and entertaining talkers—educated people, to boot—cannot write ; that is, they do not possess the art of expressing in writing the ideas and the descriptions which they communicate so well and readily by word of mouth. The moment they are made to take their place before a desk, and a pen is stuck between their fingers, their intellectual activity is paralysed. The tongue is their only conductor of thought ; ink and its vehicles are perfect non-conductors.

The aforesaid vulgar ought to

have some notion of this from the difficulty they experience in inditing a letter, even on the most ordinary and straightforward subject. They cannot form their sentences ; they cannot put their sentences, when formed, together ; they are puzzled both to begin and to end ; they reject ‘This comes hopping’ for ‘I take up my pen,’ and are obliged at last to have recourse to an amanuensis. And yet it never occurs to them that authorship, the production of something that the public will care to read, demands effort, previous thought, preliminary study, close observation, revision, careful editing.

Still less can they conceive that incessant authorship, if pursued without due relaxation, will wear a man out, down to the point of killing him. They are oblivious of the sad or sudden way in which the careers of Scott, Southey, Thackeray, Dickens, and others have come to a close. They cannot connect labour with literary works over which they shake with laughter, or smile with delight. It all reads so easy and natural. The most they concede is that ‘it is a gift,’ which to a certain extent is true. For the rest, authors, they fancy, write as spontaneously and with as little trouble as thrushes and blackbirds sing in a grove. ‘It is like picking up money in the street,’ says a slightly-educated person, on beholding a cheque received for contributions to a popular periodical.

Perhaps the belief that no trouble need be taken is one cause

of the failure of many would-be authors. 'Your easy writing,' said Byron, 'is cursed hard reading.' Editors of magazines could contribute volumes full of instances, some provoking, some laughably absurd, and some simply contemptible. Of this last class are the hideous wisps of slovenly manuscript, destitute of a single finished English sentence—those wretched sloppy compounds of crude ideas and careless diction which make one think sadly of wasted life.

What a museum of literary curiosities might be collected from rejected manuscripts!—amongst which colourless ink, illegible handwriting, illogical punctuation, and crowded interpolations would conspicuously figure. The transcription of a fair copy seems held to be a needless labour, the compositors' eyesight hardly worth regarding. Luckily this class of 'copy' does not often, as a rule, go to press. But if such authors complain of being poor, the publishers may well reply, 'Yes; because you are such very poor authors.'

I suspect that the number of people who would like to write for journals and periodicals, but who do not, for want of courage to set to work and of industry to work well afterwards, is very considerable. They may have within them the figurative straw wherewith to make their literary bricks; but then, like Israel in Egypt, they are idle. They are too idle to mould their ideas into a shapely phrase, too idle to put the facts they have witnessed into a clear and consistent narrative.

One illustrative instance will be confessed to by numbers of my readers—not confessed to the world at large, but to themselves and to my own confidential ear, if their whispers could reach it.

I allude to the case of private journal-keeping. How many thousands, before starting on their travels, have firmly resolved to enter their every impression and adventure in a diary, which should one day have all the vogue of Sterne's *Sentimental* or Rousseau's *Confessions*, and have given it up at the close of the third day, all through sheer idleness! They had not the pluck to continue the effort of painting in decent black-and-white form on paper the pictures that had passed over their cranial sensorium. Lord Lytton, in his *Student*, says that an author's unwritten works are often his best; but to obtain that hypothetical praise, the author must, I suppose, have written something. Otherwise, the inchoate catalogues of unwritten diaries ought to take a high place in literature. 'Single-speech Hamilton' might become famous through his only speech in the House of Commons; but a 'No-speech Hamilton' can expect no celebrity.

Let not a word be said against such idleness. Its wide-spread existence is providential. What a happy release it has procured the world from countless interesting works in 2 vols. 8vo! Verily—Heaven be praised for the fact!—it is not everybody who has the courage and energy to handle the pen of the ready writer. In spite of Byron's dictum, there are crowds of individuals who find it infinitely easier to read the easiest writing than to write it themselves. Hence the rush of candidates for editorial approval is kept down by the force of innate indolence. Not one out of a million who think of doing so ever leaves literary progeny, published or unpublished. The popular essayist or novel-writer is as much the result of natural selection as the

master lion of the desert, or the oak which grows to be the monarch of the wood.

Nor do people necessarily abstain from writing for want of capacity; quite the contrary. Were they only to try, they might probably rival, or not fall far short of—at least they believe so

— Milton, Byron, Macaulay, Dickens. But it would be too much trouble. They can live without it. They are willing to leave the field open to more necessitous adventurers, and to prove their intellectual ability by picking holes in the trash which others write.

LOVE IN MAY 1879.

FOOLISH, who haste unbidden to the shrine
 With costly gifts and precious sacrifice;
 Ignorant, heedless how your hands resign
 Silver and gold and gems of goodly price;
 While Love, like senseless image of carved stone,
 Gazes at all your gifts and cares for none.
 What would you gain if every whispered word
 Of your long prayers were heard?

This would Love grant you. Tears in tender eyes
 (You would not know how soon those tears were dried),
 Such sweet loud laughter, and such glad surprise
 You would not hear the sighs of those that sighed,
 A heart that half believed its own lie true,
 A sleep that dreamed a night or twain of you,
 And lips that grieved to find how little bliss
 Lies in a lover's kiss.

And yet—one flower I plucked; and other flowers
 Seemed only scentless growths of sterile earth:
 One glad long hour I dreamed; and other hours
 Became mere barren moments, little worth:
 One star I watched, whose clear and slender ray
 For me outshone the sunlight of the day,
 A light on earth more fair than stars above.
 I wonder what is love.

LONDON SOCIETY.

JUNE 1879.

THE COMÉDIE FRANÇAISE.

THE great French theatre whose company is just about to visit us is distinguished from any English theatre of the present day by this noteworthy fact—that it has a history and a character. Not one of our London playhouses, with the exception of Drury Lane (which would seem to have lost all dramatic value), can in any degree rival the two hundred years' history of the Comédie Française; nor, though the leading features of some of them—of the Prince of Wales's, notably—are sufficiently marked, are they ever very long lived. We are never sure that a year or two may not revolutionise a theatre; indeed, the only house whose specialty has fairly outlasted a generation is the Haymarket, home of the larger type of comedy.

The one permanent characteristic of the Théâtre Français has seldom been more pronounced than it is at the present moment—except perhaps when, two centuries ago, the *troupe* had its first legal establishment; yet, though constantly claimed by the French as a national trait, it is one which hardly any ordinary Englishman would think of ascribing to them. This is good sense—*le bon sens français*; though, as the term is rather applied to literature and art than to practical life, and is

used in the sense of correctness, logic, moderation, the more exact expression might be *le bon goût*—cultivated, measured, almost perfect taste. This quality indeed, with hardly a disturbing element until the recent extravagances of Hugo and of Feuillet, has reigned at the Comédie Française throughout its long history—from Molière to Augier.

The briefest sketch of that history will show how persistent has been this quality, while it may also suggest the reason of its interruption; and as a sketch that should give within the narrow limits of a magazine article an account of the Comédie Française past and present must be brief indeed, this is fortunate.

The national French theatre was first definitely constituted, under its great founder, in 1680, though it did not assume its present title till nine years later; but a long and arduous struggle for Molière and his company had preceded their attainment of this position, this crown of all their labours.

Love for an actress (Armande Béjart, whom later he married) had, it is said, induced Molière to join a *troupe* of strolling players, and for thirteen years he had travelled in the provinces, gradually rising to be manager of his

company, which soon eclipsed all its rivals. Playing at first in tragedy, afterwards in comedy, and writing a few of the extravagant farces which preluded the *Précieuses Ridicules* and the *Ecole des Maris*, Molière was held by country audiences to have fairly won his spurs; but Paris—now under the sway of three powerful companies—was an untried and dangerous field. There the tragedies of Corneille were played under the superintendence of the master, now past his prime, by the actors of the Hôtel de Bourgogne; spectacular pieces were produced with much magnificence by the *Comédiens du Marais*; and a *troupe* of Italians played their national *commedia dell' arte* with constant success.

Against these our little band of unknown country actors had to struggle; nor does it seem likely that, meeting his rivals on their own ground, Molière would have been able to maintain his position against them—it was not over-easy even to obtain the royal sanction for the establishment of another theatre in Paris. However, after his company (with himself in the principal part) had performed before the king with fair success the tragedy of *Nicomède*, Molière, in a speech of ingenious humility, asked leave to supplement their 'feeble copy of excellent originals' with a little pleasantry of their own: a farce called *Le Docteur Amoureux*, which has not been preserved. This at once took the fancy of the Court, and Molière's company forthwith received the royal license.

Even then it was nearly five years before Paris was fairly won. The *répertoire* of the company was very limited—Corneille's tragedies and a few comedies of Scarron, which the audience knew

by heart, made up the greater part of it, and the 'share' of each actor after a night's performance was sometimes scarcely more than a few pence. It was in vain that Molière threw his heart and soul into the worn-out tragedies of the day; only some of the absurd farces which had made the country-folks laugh pleased the good people of Paris. Even within his company there was danger; the rival actors of the Hôtel de Bourgogne and the Marais tried to sow dissension among the new-comers—but in vain, for Molière was not only admired and respected, but heartily loved.

At last, however, a happy satire—the *Précieuses Ridicules*—drew all Paris to the Petit Bourbon, and after this one hit all was plain-sailing. In spite of jealousy, and of the enemies made by his unsparing wit, Molière's masterpieces won him triumph after triumph; the *Misanthrope*, the *Tartuffe*, the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* were the talk of Paris then, as they have since been the pride of France; and one cannot but wonder at the perseverance and spirit which rapidly produced them, amid all the labours of acting and of management, and amid constant and bitter domestic trouble.

When one looks at the splendid statue of Molière in the *foyer* of the Comédie Française, one can partly understand the mind and heart from which those great satires came. The French take the *Misanthrope* as many of us take *Hamlet*—they look upon it as the expression of what was most characteristic of its author's mind: as, not improbably, a portrait of himself, from a certain sardonic point of view. Good sense, good taste, are the very essence of this comedy; the falsehood of courtly manners is laid

bare, while yet the futility of individual revolt against universal custom is shown. The keen sensitive face of Molière needed no mask for the part of Alceste ; nor was the brilliant, hard, good sense of the coquette Célimène a mere assumption to Armande Béjart, Molière's beautiful and faithless wife. That the form of these classical comedies is undramatic and narrow needs not to be said ; the essential fact is that they are an exact and logical statement of the spirit of their time, that their strength is that of the best sense and taste of the day, as interpreted by Molière.

Yet one must qualify the verdict of French critics upon *Le Misanthrope*; one must allow that their praise of its common sense leaves common sense behind. M. Hippolyte Lucas, for example, tells us that 'what Homer did for the heroic songs of Greece, and Dante for the Catholic traditions of the Middle Ages, this did Molière for the universal precepts of reason.' Such a comparison is surely absurd ; indeed, many Englishmen would be inclined to say that Molière was at his greatest in pure broad farce—as that of the *Mariage Forcé*—in which, if he have any rival, Aristophanes is the only one. The mere collocation of the names of *Hamlet* and the *Misanthrope* must have struck many readers as ridiculous ; indeed, I can scarcely conceive that any English spectator of this play, with which the Comédie Française commences its season at the Gaiety (acting it with every conventionality unmodified, with gestures and almost tones which have descended from Molière), will fail to find in it a lack of force and variety, a commonplaceness pervading much of the common sense, a flatness throughout contrasting most un-

favourably with the full vigour not only of Shakespeare, Congreve, or Goldsmith, but even of Sheridan in his masterpiece, the *School for Scandal*, imitated in part from this very play.

But to turn from Molière to his company, and its final triumph. In 1680 Louis XIV. united in one theatre the *troupes* which had hitherto been rivals, and gave them the exclusive right of playing tragedies and comedies in Paris—a privilege which their successors struggled hard, but vainly, to retain. A legal form of association was drawn up, and Louis allowed them 1200 livres a year—since, by degrees, increased to 240,000 francs (9600*l.*). Ground was bought whereon to build a theatre ; but this was not the present site, to which the company did not remove till a hundred years later (1789) ; and the contributions to the expense to be made by each actor were decided upon ; as also the manner of reimbursement to him or his heirs, and the payments of new members. There were twenty-three full shares, each of 8750 livres 15 sols 5 deniers ; but it must be remembered that in those days the *livre française* was a coin of value even less than that of the 'pund Scots.' Half-shares and quarter-shares might be held ; and this arrangement still continues—when an actor is elected a *sociétaire* of the company, he receives at least a quarter-share of the profits, to which a further eighth of a share is added after two years.

The great name which follows that of Molière in the annals of the Théâtre Français is that of Racine, who may be roughly said to hold the same position when compared with Corneille that Pope holds to Dryden. It is the rarest thing for an Englishman to appre-

ciate the charm of this writer; even Frenchmen, indeed, call him—like claret—*un goût acquis*. He is the poet of correctness—a title which means with him, as it did with Pope, merely the poet of care. His Greek tragedies are one vast anachronism, although it would seem that the extraordinary genius of Rachel infused into them something of a Greek spirit. Both the *Phèdre* and the *Andromaque*, which are to be played at the Gaiety, will be interesting, as Mdlle. Sarah Bernhardt is to appear as their heroines; but it is probable that their author's pleasant farce, *Les Plaideurs*, with Got, Delaunay, and Coquelin, will be more frankly enjoyed.

Corneille, Molière, and Racine—these three names filled the great classical period of French dramatic literature; but before Racine's death, had appeared a young writer of comedy, whose masterpiece still holds the stage—Regnard, frankly, carelessly, hopelessly immoral, yet the writer of the *Joueur*, which suggested the gloomy and powerful English tragedy, the *Gamester*. Messieurs Delaunay, Coquelin, Coquelin *cadet*, and the charming Mdlle. Broisat will appear in this piece at the Gaiety, and the performance will probably be among the most interesting of the classical *répertoire*. With Regnard's death there came to the front Marivaux, an artificial but delightful writer, whose still popular *Jeux de l'Amour et du Hasard* is not, I regret to notice, to be performed in England, where this exquisitely refined comedy would have had a double interest—first, from the splendid and most classical performance of M. Coquelin, unquestioned prince of stage-valets; and next, from the comparison between this the original, and the well-known two-act farce, *Check-mate*, adapted from it by Andrew

Halliday. The immense superiority in style of the comedy of Marivaux is worth more than bare recognition.

Of this period was Baron, actor and dramatist, a pupil of Molière. In his plays he studied from himself the fatuity of 'ladies' men; he was, we are told, 'spoilt by the duchesses of the day.' Was it a real event, or only a possibility, which he recorded in the scene of *L'Homme à bonnes Fortunes*, in which two women recognise on each other their own presents to their lover?

In the writers of this time we notice already the beginning of the change from the reign of the *noblesse* to that of the *bourgeoisie*; a natural step, one might say, in the path of common sense. Yet it must be confessed that at this period the morals of the French stage were at their very worst; and it does not need English prudery to find in them continual offences against good taste, in any sense of the word.

The second great period of the French theatre is, of course, that of Voltaire, who fills three-quarters of the eighteenth century, and in whom is strongly felt the commencement of that English influence which in varying forms continues through Diderot and Sédaine to Victor Hugo and even Alfred de Musset. Shakespeare was the potent spirit whose essence Voltaire strove to transfuse into the form of Racine; and though the narrow common sense of the French philosopher was shocked at the daring of the English poet, and fell into absurdities which his imagination easily overstepped, the influence was on the whole a good one. Voltaire may be individually inferior to Racine as a dramatist, but he marks the approach of a greater period; though he smells vulgarity in the strong men and

women of Shakespeare, he helps to take down from their stilts the kings and queens of Corneille. His *Zaire*, in which Mdle. Bernhardt and Mounet-Sully will appear at the Gaiety, was intended to show how Shakespeare ought to have written *Othello*; and though from this point of view a failure, it is—especially in its earlier acts—a bright and interesting drama.

In the reign of Voltaire lived two of the greatest of French actors—Le Kain and Mdle. Clairon, whom I notice here especially as carrying on the progress of common sense in one matter of some importance. While Garrick was yet dressing Macbeth like an officer in the Guards, these his contemporaries had given some sort of correctness to the costumes of their stage. It was in 1759, in the *Orphelin de la Chine* of Voltaire, that this reform was first attempted; and the experiment was at once successful, partly, perhaps, because it did not go too far. It was more in cut than in materials that the Greek or barbarian costumes of the stage departed from the fashions of Louis XV., as may be inferred from the manner by which Philoctetes was 'dressed' in Bellecour. That unhappy warrior wore a *soubreveste* of rose-coloured satin, a satin mantle of a deep red, flowered with gold and lined with 'tiger-striped' satin, and a hat adorned with ostrich feathers, which was girt with a diadem *qui se rattachait à un mufle de lion*; his hair rose in curls over his ears and in a chignon behind his head, and he carried a gilt bow and gilt arrows. This was the sort of thing which Voltaire appreciated.

Barely mentioning Piron, I will pass to younger contemporaries of Voltaire who were on the whole curiously unlike him. With Diderot and Sédaine we are among

middle-class men and women, acting, speaking, and suffering as ourselves. The *Père de Famille* of the former and the *Philosophe sans le Savoir* of the latter are as homely as the modern English school of comedy. The *Philosophe*, indeed,—an attack on the immorality of the duel,—is one of the most marked instances of the progress of common sense we shall find in the history of the French theatre. The play has been preserved to our day chiefly by the fresh and charming character of the young girl Victorine, for whose sake George Sand wrote a sequel to the comedy, which—having the exceptional fate of being more popular than the original piece—is to be performed at the Gaiety, though not with a very strong 'cast.'

It would be too long a task to show here the political importance of the stage in France during this latter half of the eighteenth century; but it was indeed a kind of forum, where all questions of public interest had some sort of hearing. That 'the Revolution began in the comedies of Beaumarchais' has been said so often, that English spectators are astonished to find in the *Mariage de Figaro* and its predecessor only merry plays of intrigue, with a minimum of philosophical disquisition; but during the Revolution itself there was a constant succession of *à propos* pieces, which held up the mirror to a singularly ugly series of faces on both sides. That throughout this period the Comédie Française produced very few violent plays—for neither *Charles IX.* nor the even more famous *Ami des Lois* is in any way extreme—proves, I think, how thoroughly moderation was a tradition of the house. The great Talma was an energetic Republican, but not, I believe, anything like a *montagnard*; and the mildly reactionary party in the

company was so strong that a split ensued, and in the sequel the conservative half was sent to prison, and there remained for some months.

But, apart from politics, the comedy and prose-drama of the Française had, as I have tried to show, grown and changed very greatly since the classical days; while the English influence, not only of Shakespeare, but of our eighteenth-century writers of 'domestic drama,' had greatly affected—I may perhaps say *humanised*—French playwrights of these schools. Tragedy alone did not develop; it became only, as people say, 'more so.' Parisian good taste, then in one of its most artificial stages, grew more and more fastidious, insisted more and more rigorously on the observance of rules laid down by the great masters, which worthy successors would have been the first to break. The broad good sense of imagination was absent, and the narrow good sense which works logically from premises it has not the strength to test grew yearly more tyrannical in its sway. When it had become unendurable Victor Hugo arose.

I do not carry my theory so far as to uphold Hugo as an example of the *bon sens français* because he set himself to oppose stupid conventionalities; he was no doubt an exception to the normal good taste of the 'house of Molière.' I only wish to point out the reason for this exception: the rule of narrow correctness had been carried too far, and it was natural that the reaction should go to the opposite extreme. *Hernani*, *Marion Delorme*, *Marie Tudor*, contain much that is absurd, much that is thoroughly vulgar and revolting; but they have a dramatic strength and reality, with an ease of expression and a freedom of

metrical form, undreamt of by Racine or Voltaire. Viewed by themselves, as works of art, they may be inexcusable; but compared with their predecessors they are a very welcome change. *Ruy Blas*, indeed, is in its way really fine—one might call it the perfection of melodrama: it has thoroughly borne the test of translation into every language, and one cannot but hope that it may be performed at the Gaiety, when the much inferior *Hernani* is to be given four times.

The story of the struggle between the classic and the romantic schools of French drama has been told so often—with its riots, its absurdities, its exaggerations—that there can be no need to repeat it. That its result was, on the whole, favourable to the romantic side, is also known; it became quite a matter of course for a heroine to address her lover as *son lion, superbe et généreux*, and for a dramatist to break up a little the monotonous cæsura of classic French verse. One point, however, deserves notice. Although in the present day we take for granted our *Ruy Blas* and *Hernani* at the Français, one is somewhat surprised to find that this conservative theatre gave the romantic drama its first trial; that *Hernani* was produced there, in the teeth of tradition, all but fifty years ago—on the 25th of February 1830. The reason which the reader of plays to the theatre gave for recommending its production was certainly a sufficiently odd one; he considered it (he said) 'a tissue of extravagances,' but thought it would be well to perform it, that the public might see how far the human mind could go astray if common sense and taste were disregarded!*

* With *Doña Sol* and *Marie Tudor* the names of Mdlles. Mars and Georges are

Hugo still lives and succeeds, but two of his most successful contemporaries, Scribe and Delavigne, have fallen into that curious temporary oblivion which awaits the celebrities of time just past. In Scribe, artificial though he be, one finds to a high degree the finish and balance, the charm and grace, distinctive of the French. In thorough knowledge of the stage almost every other dramatist yields to him; and it is a matter of regret that in the coming season the Comédie Française purposes to give us no example of a real, if not a great, master of his art. For Delavigne, I will only note in passing his tact and fine sense, as shown especially in the *École des Vieillards*, a story of an unequal marriage.

It is a strange fact that in the earlier part of the decade, 1830-40, during the *débuts* of Victor Hugo and the prime of Scribe and Delavigne, the fortunes of the Comédie Française were at a lower ebb than ever before or since. In the whole of 1831 the theatre hardly took 12,000*l.*, and one night *Tartuffe* and *Le Legs* were performed to a house holding less than three pounds! In a word, the nightly receipts did not average 33*l.*, and with so large and powerful a company as was needed for their *répertoire* this must have been altogether insufficient. Despite the Government subvention of 200,000 francs, the theatre had in 1833 nearly 600,000 francs of debt;

imperishably connected. These two actresses were, with the great Talma, the chief favourites of Napoleon I., who was deeply interested in the stage, and especially in the tragedies of Corneille. At Moscow even, when his power was tottering to its terrible fall, he gave time and thought to the drawing up of a code of no less than 101 articles for the regulation of the Comédie Française, of which the chief provisions are still in force, although at the Restoration the code itself was nominally annulled.

nor—to anticipate a little—was this altogether cleared off till some fifteen years later, when the Government of Louis Philippe came to the rescue with a loan of 300,000 francs.

But long before this latter date had happened one of the great events in the history of the French theatre—the appearance of Rachel. On the 12th of June 1838, before a house not one-eighth full, this Jewish girl of seventeen made her *début* as Camille in the *Horaces* of Corneille; in the autumn of the same year she played, to houses densely crowded, all the heroines of the great classical tragedies, already beyond dispute the supreme genius of the French stage—more than our Siddons, more than their Le Kain or Talma. ‘All the heroines,’ I have said—but with one exception, and that probably the part in which she was most unrivalled: it was not till nearly five years later that she made imperishably her own the *Phèdre* of Racine. There seems to have been an almost unearthly exaltation in the presence and the voice of Rachel, which saved from any touch of realism the unholy passion to which the terrible woman of Greek story was a prey. There was little humanity about Rachel, little of the warmth of every-day affection; one cannot imagine her indulging in the realistic tears and hugs of the present drama, and, as a fact, she was greatly successful in but one non-classical piece—*Adrienne Lecouvreur*. She was pure poetry, pure passion, a statue, a flash of lightning; of all geniuses, we can the least expect to see her like again.

One detail as to her career is, in these dreadful days of long runs, very notable: she never played any one part a hundred times. Of the forty-four characters in which she appeared, *Andromaque* was the

one she played most frequently—viz. ninety-nine times; Phèdre came second, with seventy-four; in *Polyeucte* she acted seventy-one times, and in *Adrienne Lecouvreur* sixty-nine. On an average, she played a part about twenty-five times, in her career of seventeen years (from the 12th June 1838 to the 23d July 1855).

After Rachel, even the names of Arnould-Plessy, of Geffroy, and of Regnier—still connected with the Français and the Conservatoire—lose interest, brilliant though in themselves they be; but before I come to the celebrities of to-day I must note the brief and splendid career of the most poetical of French poets, Alfred de Musset, whose *proverbes* are almost an epoch in stage history. The exquisite taste of which I have so often spoken finds its purest expression in these day-dreams; there is perhaps nothing in dramatic literature parallel to the sad fantasy which he has called *Une Nuit d'Octobre*. Venice—the poet's Venice, that 'never was on sea or land'—lives again in his caprices, his sleepless nights. Of dramatic construction there is hardly a trace in these reveries, these quiet idylls of the feverish town; they begin, and go on, and end, somehow—but they are like real dreams; it is quite a chance when one wakes. Would that there were an opportunity for such dreams in the present English theatre!

And now to turn to the writers of to-day. I will leave on one side the so-called philosophy of M. Dumas *fils*—if it is worth discussing at all, it is worth discussing at greater length than would here be possible—and the so-called realism of M. Feuillet. Both are well represented in the English performances. Of M. Dumas we are to have (twice)

L'Etrangère—absurdly misrepresented at the Haymarket some years ago—in which Mdlle. Bernhardt will again deliver the famous speech; Mdlle. Croizette and MM. Coquelin and Febvre will give us the *parvenue* duchess, the *vibrion*, and the admirable Yankee; and Madame Madeleine Brohan will lend her unrivalled charm of sweetness and placid dignity to a very small part. We have also this author's *Fils Naturel* (twice) and his celebrated *Demi-Monde*, in which Mdlle. Croizette is brilliant, characteristic, and powerful as in hardly any other part; M. Febvre is full of manliness and feeling; M. Delaunay is almost too vivacious; and the exquisite simplicity and girlish charm of Mdlle. Broisat shine at their brightest against a dark and unpleasant background.

Of M. Feuillet we have *Le Village*, and (three times) the notorious *Sphinx*, in which Mdlle. Croizette will show—hardly perhaps in the strictest accordance with the *bon goût* aforesaid—how realistically even a pretty woman can render the death-agony, if she chooses.

Dumas and Feuillet, then, set aside, let us look at the great typical writer of the Français of to-day—M. Emile Augier. Thoroughly to appreciate the power of this dramatist, one ought to see those studies of society, *Les Effrontés* and *Le Fils de Giboyer*—in the former especially there is a largeness, a dignity, almost Elizabethan. In his vigorous prose, his strong but not prudish morality, his study of character and avoidance of caricature, M. Augier is a noble model for English dramatists. It is perhaps a pity that we shall see him only in his *Fourchambault* (apparently not a first-rate work, though it will be interesting for the sake of

comparison with its English adaptation, the *Crisis*), his *Gendre de M. Poirier*—charming as it is—and a slight comedietta. Of course, one understands that the Comédie could not be expected to rehearse a heavy piece like *Les Effrontés* for a single performance; but one regrets its absence.

With the keen sense of Molière we began, with the steady sense of Augier we end, this sketch of French dramatists. Turning to the actors, we find at the head of the present *troupe* a remarkable example of our theory. M. Got is common sense embodied. He is not remarkably funny, his pathos is rather good than great, he is always very much alike; but he is an actor so solid, of such thorough intelligence and cultivation, so artistic and so sincere, that he wins universal respect and liking. During his stay in England he will be seen in nearly all his very best parts, except Giboyer—a character which, one would think, must die with him—and the proud and poor Duc Job. His M. Poirier is already known here, but I am almost inclined to prefer to it the good old Jewish priest in *L'Ami Fritz*—a pastoral surely never excelled in quiet beauty and completeness on any stage. He plays, too, Regnier's great part in *La Joie fait Peur*, and shows us again how different from Charles Mathews it is possible to be in *Mercadet* (*A Game of Speculation*). Finally, he gives his original—and perhaps most famous—creation, the Abbé, in *Il ne faut jurer de Rien*; he plays many parts in classical comedy; and he enters into a friendly rivalry with our admirable actor, Mr. Charles Kelly, in his part in the *Fourchambault*.

Next to the name of Got has stood for many years that of Delaunay, most famous among

lovers—the 'silver-tongued Barry' of our day. We shall not see him as the poet—the Alfred de Musset!—of the *Nuit d'Octobre*, nor as the boyish Horace of the *Ecole des Femmes*, two of his greatest parts; but the selection of plays in which he appears leaves very little to regret. Above all, the three young heroes of De Musset—Perdican, Valentin, and the reckless Octave—will find their fittest representative in him. In Augier and in Dumas *fils* M. Delaunay seems somehow out of place; it is the every-day world, and he is not of it. He appears artificial, too much given to posing, his inflections are too elaborately varied; perhaps, also, there is a certain want of human nature in him—and this last fault makes it impossible for him to sound the depths of the part in which, unfortunately, he will first be seen—Alceste, the Misanthrope. But in the creations of De Musset his sweet voice makes perfect the charm of the sad youthful poetry, and in the lighter parts of classical comedy the *verve*, the boyish restlessness and recklessness, and, throughout all, the finished art of his playing, are indescribable and unrivalled.

Intelligence and mastery of his art are the leading characteristics of the third among the *sociétaires* of this singularly homogeneous company; but M. Coquelin is one of those men whose greatest ill-luck it has been to be too lucky. He has obtained such a position in the first theatre in Europe that he plays (apparently) whatever parts he likes, whether or not he be naturally fitted for them. As what is technically called a 'low comedian'—in the valets of old comedy, above all—it is scarcely too much to say that he is absolutely perfect; but when he is in Paris it is comparatively seldom

that he appears in this his true line. With an ambition which one hardly likes to blame, he tries to make us forget, in poetical parts, his comic face, his natural advantages for valets and drolls; and, as was to be expected, it is at best a *succès d'estime* which he obtains. In really serious parts he is timid, and consequently commonplace; and in what is called 'character' acting he cannot stand for a moment against the numberless brilliant comedians of the English stage.

But, most fortunately, we are this summer to have many opportunities of seeing him in the parts in which he has no living rival. In *Mascarille*, *Figaro*, *Petit-Jean*, a dozen other characters, his drollery is superb; he has the confidence of a thorough artist; he commands our frankest laughter without the slightest loss of self-respect; he gives to low-comedy a dash and brilliancy of life that make it more akin to poetry than his most ambitious attempts in higher paths.

What qualities are more characteristic of M. Frédéric Febvre than good sense and good taste? A straightforward and manly actor of a thoroughly good school, he is invaluable to his company in such parts as *Clarkson* (in *L'Etrangère*), *De Nanjac* (in the *Demi-Monde*), and others, for which quiet strength is the great requisite. In such a character as that of the hero of *Marcel*, where actual passion is needed, he fails; but repose and dignity are no mean qualities, and these—together with an individuality rare among French actors—M. Febvre possesses in a high degree.

And now for two actors altogether unlike their fellows—M. Mounet-Sully and M. Coquelin *cadet*. The former of these has a glorious voice, a handsome face,

and a fine presence; but it was feared until quite recently that he would throw away these gifts from a mere want of discretion in their use: he carried everything—facial expression, action, and declamation—to a pitch of violence rare indeed at the Comédie Française. Fortunately, it is said that in the last new part which he has undertaken, *Ruy Blas*, he has gained immensely in moderation, and—as naturally follows—in effect. Unfortunately, it is not yet certain whether we shall see him in this character, or only in *Hernani*, in which his old faults were yet unconquered, and in the heroes of classical tragedy, where they were singularly out of place. With or without his faults, however, M. Sully is the only possible tragedian on the French stage.

M. Coquelin the younger was at first by no means successful in his attempts to follow in the footsteps of his brother, and even now there is no sort of comparison between them in the parts where the elder is at his best. But Coquelin *cadet* is to some extent the black swan of the French stage—a character-actor. Undoubtedly the most brilliant thing in *L'Ami Fritz* is his intensely appreciative rendering of the eager, greedy Frédéric (so admirably thrown into relief by the comfortable Hanezo of M. Barré); and the one most exquisite and original sketch that I remember to have seen at the Français was his *Mari qui pleure*—a 'funny man,' with whom, as in all funny men of the better type, tears were almost as near the surface as laughter. But, alas, the *Mari qui pleure* (M. Jules Prével's first comedy) is not to be given at the Gaiety.

And before I turn to some short notice of the leading actresses of the Français, I should like to say a word as to the selection and

casting of the smaller pieces to be played by the company this June. For some of these—*La Joie fait Peur* particularly—I have nothing but praise; but there are faults of omission and commission that call for criticism. Surely a place ought to have been found for the *Nuit d'Octobre* and the *Passant*, whatever else was omitted; and, still more surely, it was unwise to peril the reputation of the Français for such little masterpieces by offering the *Village* and *Chez l'Avocat* inadequately cast. Without entering into any comparison between Madame Agar and Mrs. Bancroft, I may say that it is questionable whether at the Comédie Française *Le Village* could ever be played as well as it was (under the title of the *Vicarage*) at the Prince of Wales's, by the manageress, Mr. Cecil, and Mr. Kendal; but with MM. Barré and Garraud comparison becomes impossible. Similarly, that *Chez l'Avocat*, with which is associated the name of Sarah Bernhardt, should depend upon Mdlle. Samary and MM. Boucher and Joliet to rival the admirable miniatures of the Prince of Wales's and the Court, must be a grave mistake.

Of the actresses of the Comédie Française, and of French actresses generally as contrasted with English, one might say much. I will confine myself to pointing out that, while in women of genius the modern French theatre is probably no richer than ours, its *average* is yet beyond comparison higher. The 'walking ladies' of the Français are invariably good—intelligent, graceful, and with voices whose sweetness makes the harsh uncultivated tones of our ordinary actresses seem dissonant indeed. But of the twelve *sociétaires* of the theatre I can now speak only of four, leaving with-

out addition even the few lines already given to the refinement and charm of Madame Brohan and the exquisite grace of Mdlle. Broisat—an *ingénue* far more simple and unaffected than the celebrated Reichemberg.

The most famous actress in the company—Mdlle. Sarah Bernhardt—has, it is well known, other claims upon our interest than her dramatic powers. She is a sculptor of distinguished merit; she has written a book of poems—*Nuages* they are called, and the name is sufficiently appropriate to make it unkind to dwell longer upon them; she is a musician, and a beautiful woman; 'and,' a Parisian critic would probably add, 'she goes up in balloons.' In a word, Mdlle. Bernhardt is always doing something—she is always *en évidence*; the public are never allowed to forget her—a fault, perhaps, but a matter in no way affecting her merits as a tragedian. It is allowed almost universally that the only possible successor to the parts of Rachel is Bernhardt; while her warmest admirers admit that she lacks the tremendous power of the great Jewess, and also, I imagine, her strong, single, unerring dramatic instinct. But every character into which Mdlle. Bernhardt throws herself she fills with poetry—with a dream-like beauty, an inexpressible charm of refinement and intelligence. Her delivery, whether of the prose of Dumas or of the cadences of Racine, of Hugo, of Coppée, is beyond reproach—almost, French critics say, beyond criticism. There will be no plays more interesting to English students than the six in which Mdlle. Bernhardt will appear—*Phèdre*, *Andromaque*, *Zaire*, *Hernani*, *Le Sphinx*, and *L'Etrangère*.

Mdlle. Croizette is, in her own way, a remarkable actress. It is

rarely that one sees a piece of realism so perfect as her performance of the heroine of the *Demi-Monde*. The hard, impudent, caressing creature, clever and yet pitiable, is brought before one fearlessly and completely; and, it may be added, this is the only way in which the part could be played. Most Englishwomen would, by trying to soften its unpleasantness, ruin the significance of it and of the drama.

Croizette's most famous part is, of course, the Blanche of Feuillet's repulsive *Sphinx*; but perhaps her finest creation is Baronnette in *Jean de Thommeray*. The character saved the play (which is by MM. Augier and Sandeau) from imminent shipwreck. The actress here created a specialty. She has in her own line no rival—let us hope that she may not be troubled with many followers.

It would, however, be most unjust not to give a word of praise to Mdlle. Croizette's powers of light comedy, and to her grace and care in those quiet heroines that hardly of right belong to her.

Mdlle. Favart, since her *début* in 1848, has played a very large round of most varying parts, and for a quarter of a century has borne on her shoulders much of the hard work of the Français. She is an actress of unquestionable power; and her style, if somewhat mannered and conventional, is always large and robust. Her finest part, the Adventuress in Augier's play of that name (the original of Robertson's *Home*), we shall not have an opportunity of seeing this season. She may not appear as the heroine of the celebrated *Supplice d'une Femme*, but in several other leading and some secondary rôles.

And the spoilt child of Paris, the favourite *ingénue* of the Français.—Mdlle. Reichemberg—will appear in almost all her favourite parts, except, of course, the very best! This is Agnès in *L'Ecole des Femmes*, the character in which she made her *début*, and won the often-quoted compliment of Théophile Gautier; and it is, it must be noted, not a *real* example of the type of *ingénue*, for Agnès is as thorough a little humbug as ever lived. I can quite imagine that English audiences will think the simplicity of Mdlle. Reichemberg, in parts where she is *not* supposed to be a little humbug, somewhat overdrawn; but we have not the type in real life in England, while in France it abounds, and is very genuine and very charming. In any case, however, it is to be hoped that all will see how admirable, how artistic, and how thorough an actress Mdlle. Reichemberg is.

I should like to go on, to speak of many others, especially of Madame Agar, though she is only a *pensionnaire* of the company, paid by a fixed salary—not one of the *sociétaires*, who have a direct interest in the fortunes of the house—but space forbids. I can only repeat how thoroughly, with certain exceptions, all that is done by the Comédie Française is penetrated by the good sense of its founder, and express a wish that actors of the English school—which fully deserves comparison with the French—will profit by this opportunity of criticising the merits and faults of their rivals; and, while avoiding the conventionality which is the bane of much of the Français acting, will imitate its superior breadth and fullness of style, its avoidance of pettiness, eccentricity, and trick.

FORTUNES MADE IN BUSINESS.

IX.

RICHARD HARTMANN, THE CHEMNITZ ENGINEER AND MACHINIST.

It was in the month of February 1832 when a young man, a journeyman edge-tool maker, then on his travels, which every German artisan has to undertake to get perfect in his trade by working under different masters, arrived at the Saxon town of Chemnitz. In his pocket he had six shillings, the proceeds of his silver watch, which he had been obliged to sell. With a light heart and healthy appetite he ate his plain supper at the Bear, where he had found quarters for the night; nor did his poverty prevent him from sleeping soundly. Did some benevolent fairy reveal to him in his dreams how his name was hereafter to be identified with that of the town he had entered? Probably not; but the fact is now patent to us that the then insignificant Chemnitz owes its rapid rise and present flourishing condition to the poor and unknown travelling artisan who that night slept within its walls.

That artisan was Richard Hartmann. He was born on the 8th of November at Barr, in Alsace. He had two brothers older, and two sisters younger, than himself. Both his parents died in the decade between 1850 and 1860, and therefore lived long enough to be witnesses of the triumphs of their third son. Even at an early age he was of an exceedingly lively disposition, which made him a great favourite with

all his acquaintances, and on the strength of the indulgence shown to him in consequence, he would occasionally practise mischievous tricks. Thus young Richard one night, in going home, soiled his clothes by running against a cart standing in the street. This so enraged him, that he speedily procured a saw and cut the axle of the cart in two, since he considered that the carter deserved punishment for not having suspended a lantern from his vehicle. But the latter was of a different opinion; and the son's energetic act of revenge cost his father money and trouble; nor did the boy escape well-deserved punishment. On another occasion, while strolling about in the country, he noticed a van drawn by three horses, the driver of which had for a few moments gone away. Richard seized this opportunity to unharness one of the horses, leap on its back, and take a ride in the fields. After having gratified his whim, he unconcernedly left the horse to its fate, and made good his escape. But he was punished for this illegitimate ride by what sportsmen call 'losing leather.' His natural quickness may be inferred from the following anecdote. While he was yet learning to read, a joker asked him, 'What had neither beginning nor end?' Richard, without long consideration, tore the first and last leaves

out of his spelling-book, and answered boldly, 'This book.' No wonder that the boy's mother felt somewhat anxious as to his future, for the time had arrived for settling the trade he was to follow. For his father's occupation, who was a tanner, he felt no inclination; Richard therefore was apprenticed to an edge-tool maker, George Dietz of Barr, a stern and severe man, who, for the time, clipped the wings of the wild young bird. On the completion of his apprenticeship the young man in 1828 began his *Wanderschaft*, or travels, directing his footsteps towards Germany. He worked at various places; bravely hammering away at Mannheim, Jena, Neustadt, and other places, sometimes also suffering from an empty stomach and an empty purse; but always in good spirits, cheering and amusing his fellow-workmen. It was his lucky star that led him to Saxony, and into the town of Chemnitz, where we first introduced him to the reader as eating a modest supper, and then sleeping soundly, in spite of the generally unsatisfactory nature of his condition.

The following morning he cast about him for work, which he obtained in the establishment of C. G. Haubold sen., the founder of the Chemnitz engineering works. Richard Hartmann as yet understood very little of the construction of machinery, but by observation and study he speedily made himself acquainted with its leading principles. Not satisfied, like his mates, with supplying good work, he seized every opportunity to understand the mechanism of the machines he helped to construct, devoting his attention chiefly to carding engines, and endeavouring to improve them where possible. His employer did not fail to appreciate the young man's

zeal and intelligence; and in spite of his youth promoted him to the position of foreman of the carding engine makers. Hartmann now had many older and more experienced workmen under him; but his object was to attain his own independence, which, however, was surrounded with many difficulties. He was without means; it was incumbent on him to save; but this was a lesson more hard to learn than any other. However, his sweetheart—the thoughtful Bertha—took the matter in hand. Every pay-day she insisted on her gay lover handing her two ducats out of his wages, of which sum she took care. Certes, there were moments when the good resolutions he had formed were cast to the winds, and then many a fair ducat, laid up in Bertha's store, was squandered in extravagance. But yet after a few years Hartmann's loving treasurer had the considerable sum of one hundred and fifty ducats in her money-box, and the young man seriously thought of setting up in business on his own account. His anxieties were rather increased than lessened, yet he was always a joyous companion, indulging in all kinds of freaks and mischievous tricks. Thus, in 1834, when the Guild of Tailors had politely invited him to a ball, he managed to get a he-goat, attired in gaily coloured clothes, introduced into the ballroom, just as the tailors were merrily tripping it on the light fantastic toe. As in Germany 'Goat' is a nickname for a tailor, the beautifiers of the human form bitterly resented the insult. Hartmann only laughed; but Bertha, and the future father-in-law, Father Oppett, a respectable citizen and tavern-keeper, at times felt doubtful as to the future prospects of the wild young man. But his love of fun and gaiety

were, so to speak, the lubricating ingredient of an untiring activity. When in May 1837 he applied for the freedom of the town of Chemnitz—and on that occasion gave the parting dinner of the fellow-craft—he was as wild and gay as on the day on which, five years previous, he had arrived in the town.

It was at the commencement of the year 1837 that Richard Hartmann set up in business on his own account, assisted by three workmen. In the autumn of the same year he married his Bertha, who to this day has been his true and loving helpmate. And the first years of their married life were full of struggles and anxieties. Their home consisted of two small rooms; and many a time there was great difficulty in scraping together the money required for the workmen's weekly wages. Now the father-in-law, now some other friend, had to lend his assistance. The first profits, too, were spent in enlarging the workshops, in which cotton-spinning machines were chiefly manufactured, and on which work Hartmann employed after some time about thirty hands. But in 1840 the invention of great improvements in weaving and carding engines brought such an increase of work to Hartmann that he was obliged to remove to larger premises; and as, in a short time, the number of hands he employed rose to seventy-six, he transferred his workshops to the locality known as the Convent Mill. Orders came in in such abundance that on many occasions the works had to be kept going day and night. Coffee and other restoratives were served out to the hands under the personal superintendence of Hartmann's wife.

Twice Hartmann had taken a partner, but in neither case did

the connection last long. The second was dissolved in 1841. From this year dates the great rise of Hartmann's establishment. From year to year its extent increased. The proprietor himself invented and introduced many improvements in the machinery for producing cotton twist and yarn; and his invention of the self-acting mule was the beginning of a new era in the manufacture of textile fabrics. In 1845 he removed his establishment, then occupying 350 hands, to new premises erected by him in Leipsic-street. His star was in the ascendant.

Before the year above mentioned Hartmann had already engaged about thirty hands in the construction of steam-engines. In consequence of the solid workmanship and careful finish that distinguished them, considerable orders came in: so that also in this branch of manufacture the number of workmen had to be increased. The great innate talents of the master in the construction of machinery became every day more evident. Every new success enlarged his views and developed his powers. Nor was he wanting in that perception of character which enables the employer of labour on a large scale to choose the most fitting instruments for carrying out his ideas. In all his enterprises he readily listened to the opinions and hints of his superior assistants, thus aiding his own judgment. But in most cases he followed his own inspirations, which generally proved the most correct. New ideas which, after reflection thereon, appeared to him practicable, he carried out at once and energetically. After his removal to Leipsic-street, he determined to add to his former enterprises the construction of locomotives. In this he sought and obtained the support of Govern-

ment ; and thus, in 1848, the first locomotive of his manufacture, called 'Good Luck' (*Glück Auf*), was delivered to the administration of the Saxon-Bavarian state line. To secure for all his branches, but especially the building of locomotives, the best working tools, he, with several of his engineers, in 1848 undertook a journey to England. During his stay in this country the political disturbances which had long agitated Germany culminated in a series of storms which injuriously affected trade and commerce. Hartmann's establishment suffered like all the rest ; but his active mind, ever full of resources, was not dismayed. He turned his attention to the manufacture of firearms, with which he occupied a great portion of his hands. Government also, recognising the necessity of maintaining an establishment like Hartmann's, assisted him with pecuniary advances. For the manufacture of firearms could only be looked upon as a makeshift, since, in order to render it a paying undertaking, it would have been necessary to modify essentially nearly all his working machinery. But he succeeded in his main object—that of keeping together his most valued workmen. And the slack time was further utilised for enlarging the workshops and generally improving the machinery ; so that when real work was resumed, it was on a scale of activity which placed Hartmann's establishment amongst those of the first rank. In the year 1850 it gave employment to upwards of eight hundred hands.

In 1854 Hartmann erected his own foundries. In 1855 he undertook the construction of turbines and millwork, and soon after that of mining and boring machinery ; and in 1857 a new department for the making of engineering tools

was added to his very extensive works, which now occupied about fifteen hundred hands, and embraced an area of 160,000 square yards, about half of which were covered by buildings containing six steam-engines, while in the blacksmiths' shops eighty forges were constantly at work. But Hartmann's untiring activity was not satisfied with these successes. He paid repeated visits to France and England to study the latest mechanical improvements and inventions of either country on the spot, adopting what was best in his own establishment, which had already become a kind of model factory, when in July 1860 a fire broke out, which in one night destroyed three sides of the square of buildings of which the works consisted. But Hartmann was equal to the occasion. Though more than eight hundred workmen were thrown out of their ordinary employ, their workshops and tools being destroyed, not one of them was dismissed. They were employed in the erection of an enormous though temporary wooden building, in which, within a few weeks after the catastrophe, they set to work again at their usual occupation, making use of such machinery as had been saved from the fire or hastily procured. Within seven weeks orders were being carried out as if nothing had happened. Quickly new buildings arose in the place of those which had been burnt down, surpassing the latter in size and architectural pretension. Yearly fresh additions were made to the works already in existence, so that at the present moment they occupy a prominent position among the industrial establishments of Germany. Forty years ago Richard Hartmann entered Chemnitz with two dollars in his pocket, and now his workshops, with the ma-

chinery they contain, are insured for one and a half million of dollars ! And it is not by being a hard taskmaster that Hartmann achieved his successes ; he always proved himself the kindly adviser and helpful friend of such of his work-people as deserved his confidence, and the 'hands' themselves acknowledged this when, at the jubilee held on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the foundation of the factory, they presented their master with an album representing, in a series of photographs, the life of Hartmann and the progress of the establishment founded by him, as well as the portraits of all his then and former *employés*.

A stroll through the works of Richard Hartmann, forming no inconsiderable annexe to the town of Chemnitz, introduces you into one of the most teeming hives of industry, abounding in tools, machinery, and other ingenious appliances, of the most diversified kind, for abolishing or reducing human labour. There are workshops for the construction of cotton, flax, and jute-spinning machinery, steam-engines, locomotives, hydraulic and other presses, turbines, cranes, pumps, and, in short, every kind of apparatus which modern art, science, or industry has invented, or requires for carrying on its own purposes. There are immense buildings, where the heavy blows of ponderous steam-hammers cause the massive walls to vibrate ; others, where modern Vulcans, in front of the roaring forge, wield and swing their heavy hammers, which would have frightened the Cyclops of antiquity ; again, others full of lathes of every kind and size ; in the building devoted to the making of tools, &c., there is a colossal lathe, on which axles fifty feet long may be turned, or screws of the same length cut ; and

there is, moreover, in the same building, one of the largest planing machines to be found in Europe. To sum up in a few words : the factory now embraces, on an area of about 271,700 square yards, something like fifty distinct buildings, surmounted by twelve tall chimneys, and containing twelve steam-engines, 120 forges, seven steam-hammers, 360 lathes, and about 340 other machines and engines for various purposes. The buildings are warmed with steam and lighted with gas ; they are fire-proof throughout. One hundred and twenty of the *employés* are trained as firemen ; and on several occasions when fires have broken out in the town of Chemnitz, they and their steam fire-engine have proved of the greatest service to the inhabitants. In 1870 the works gave employment to about 2900 hands.

The merits of the establishment founded by Richard Hartmann have met with frequent public recognition. It was honourably mentioned at the Industrial Exhibition of Dresden (1843), and obtained the large gold medal at that of Leipsic in 1845 ; in 1844 it also obtained the large gold medal at the Berlin Exhibition, and the first prize medals at Munich (1854) and Paris (1855) respectively ; in 1862 it received four prize medals at the London Exhibition, and in 1867 a gold and two silver medals at the Paris Exhibition. Richard Hartman himself has been honoured by his own sovereign and others ; he was made Councillor of Commerce, a Knight of the Saxon Order of Merit, of the Bavarian Order of St. Michael, of the Prussian Order of the Crown (third class), and of the Prince Reuss Civil Cross of Honour (first class). Among his workmen there are many who have

been with him for more than twenty-five years, and they form what in the establishment is called the 'Old Guard.' In 1858 the completion of the hundredth locomotive was celebrated by a grand festival, in which all Chemnitz participated; the Ministry, Count Beust at their head, came from Dresden to be present.

Richard Hartmann has all his lifetime retained the affable and genial manners which have ever secured him true and steady friends, and may, in no slight degree, have contributed to his success in all his undertakings. Let us conclude this sketch with an anecdote which shows the man's character in an amiable light.

When Hartmann was about twenty years of age, and, as we have seen above, on his travels, he met one evening, on a road in the Rhine country, a farmer returning home in his wagon. 'My good man, the evening is come, and I am tired; pray give me a lift a little way,' he said to the farmer. The latter consented; and during the ride Hartmann so won his good-will, that on arriving at the farm its master bade him come in, eat, drink, and be merry.

And Hartmann was the boy to do it, and many a jug was drained dry. The mistress of the house at first made a sour face, but she could not for any length of time resist the influence of the youth's pleasant manners; and on his taking leave next day—for they made him stop all night—he was urgently pressed to pay them another visit, on his passing that way again. But thirty years elapsed before he passed that way again. The farmer and his wife had forgotten all about the merry youth, whom thirty years ago they had asked to pay them another visit, when a middle-aged gentleman one day stepped into the farmhouse, and quietly observed, 'You were kind enough to ask me, on my last visit, to look you up whenever I came this way again; here I am, very glad to see you both looking well and hearty.' Explanations followed, and the visitor was none the less welcome because the whilom travelling journeyman had become the great engineering prince of Chemnitz, for which town he has done perhaps as much as Sir James Ramsden has done for Barrow-in-Furness.

A DAUGHTER OF MUSIC.

Rose, with her dower of golden tresses,
Sits at the open piano to-night ;
And the moon, in her glory of maiden graces,
Folds the room in a dream of light ;
For the lamps are unlit and the curtains undrawn,
And the moonbeams float like a silver dawn
Through all the wide windows that look on the lawn.

Delicate fingers, daintiest things,
Over the keyboard glance and gleam ;
And out of the world of hidden strings
Music upfloats like a wondrous dream :
A dream fulfilled through the march of years,
In loves and sorrows and hopes and fears,
And fever of longing and passion of tears.

Hark, it is Beethoven, vast and deep,
Sways the souls of the yielding strings ;
Now as in torture they wail and weep,
Now they whisper like wafted wings ;
And now 'tis the ripple of rhythmic waves,
In starlit seas, amid starlit caves,
Where never a tempest rocks and raves.

And Chopin, dreamer of sad strange dreams,
In a mist of mazurkas comes and goes ;
And ringed with a splendour of shifting gleams
Schumann glides to a gloomful close ;
And Mendelssohn, fair as the angels be,
Comes, like a breeze from a peaceful sea,
In a molten moonlight of melody.

And others are here of the soulful art,
Making their heart-beats audible ;
Weber and Schubert and sunny Mozart,
All three beloved of the gods too well :
And lo, they glimmer and pale and pass,
And the moonlight, bereft of them, whispers ' Alas !'
And the strings give a sigh for the music that was.

And Rose, with her wonderful wealth of tresses,
Forsaketh the open piano to-night ;
And the moon, in her glory of maiden graces,
Folds the room in a dream of light ;
And out on the upland the winds go by,
And murmur and mutter and droop and die ;
All else is silent in earth and sky.

All else is silent under the sky,
For Rose has deserted the voiceful keys,
And Schumann and Schubert silent lie
In a slumber of speechless fantasies ;
And the ' Songs without Words' are sung and o'er,
And lie like waves on a desert shore
When the winds that woke them are heard no more.

Songs without words ! Ah, tuneful maiden,
 Thine eyes to-night have a tearful glow ;
 Like sapphirine seas with mist o'erladen,
 And fervour of sunset shining through !
 To that wordless music thy soul hath sung
 A strange libretto unchanted long ;
 Nay, words that never have found a tongue !

A strange libretto of hopes and fears,
 And loves and longings and visions flown ;
 Ay me, the song of the changeful years !
 For Rose to-night hath a mournful tone ;
 And so by the window she sits and dreams,
 Sits transfigured in glorious gleams,
 Till herself but a part of the moonlight seems.

Rose, you are rich in golden fancies ;
 Your life is a perfume of sweets and flowers ;
 You live in an Eden of soft romances,
 Where cares invade not the languid hours :
 It cannot be that your heart makes moan ;
 That you pine like a queen on a loveless throne,
 Mid splendid sorrows and hearts of stone.

Who knows ?—O maiden, I pray thee tell,
 This river whereof thou drinkest free,
 This river that flows from a secret well,
 This thing called Music, what is't to thee ?
 Hast thou a thirst that its wave can drown ?
 Or is it that when thou kneelest down,
 And gazest into its depth unknown,

Thou seest thine own soul shadowed there,
 And bendest over the mystic marge,
 Rejoicing to find it a thing so fair ;
 Nor ever heeding how many a barge
 Goes glimmering on adown the breeze,
 Glimmering on 'twixt the tremulous trees,
 On and on to the unseen seas ?

Yet how can thy soul itself behold
 In a stream so troubled, that foams as it flows ?
 Its waters are vexed with a passion untold,
 And *thou* art as soft as a dove, sweet Rose.
 Beethoven loved, and was loved not again ;
 Chopin won little of love but its pain ;
 Surely *thou* canst not have loved in vain ?

Nay, I will ask no more, sweet Rose,
 But leave thee alone till another day ;
 And only petition of One who knows
 That Grief, when it find thee, as find it may,
 Shall seem unto Art as a friend, not foe ;
 That each to the other its wealth may show,
 And the Daughter of Music be brought not low.*

* Eccles. xii. 4.

THE STORY OF A RETURN-TICKET.

At last I had arranged everything for a good long holiday. I really wanted it very much. I may also state—and I desire to do so in a modest sort of way—that I really think I deserved one. I had been working very hard. I had been working in an East-end parish, where we are really made to understand what work means, as a curate, on a hundred a year. I lived in one of the best houses of the parish, which was nevertheless a mean little house; and if I left my study-window open, and I always drew as near as I could towards the light, some of my beloved parishioners would not mind sweeping anything they could off my study-table. I had only one friend, the son of a peer, who had taken similar lodgings in a similar street with a view of studying the great question of the condition of the people. A brief residence satisfied him respecting the problems of this great question, and he then cleared out in the direction of Belgravia. My rector was then the only gentleman and man of education in the neighbourhood. He suffered greatly, however, from Population on the Brain. He was always talking, thinking, dreaming, writing, working, about the population of his parish. He was constantly writing to School Boards, to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, to charitable societies, to charitable individuals, about his population, which seemed to be always increasing, according to the Malthusian theory, in a geometrical ratio. I think, however, that I had the largest part of the work to do among the

population, so far as the arrivals, junctions, and departures of the said population were concerned. Having had no holiday for a couple of years, I was not surprised that my rector volunteered at last that I should take one; telling me, however, that the Population would be glad to see me back on my earliest convenience. I stood out, however, for six weeks, and made up my mind that I would not open any letter or telegram which my rector might send me till the six weeks were over. Only I did.

I was taking fifty pounds with me for the expenses of those six weeks. This was the amount of one whole half-year of my annual stipend. Of course I should not be able to spare all this out of my salary. But fortunately I had an aunt, one of the right sort, who hadn't much money, indeed, but who did more good with her little than most people by their abundance. She it was who, when my parents wanted me to enter the Law, told me, if I so preferred, to take the Gospel instead; and when my friends considerably informed me that I was dooming myself to poverty and obscurity, said that, as far as her narrow means went, she would back me up. Her means were but small, but her hearty sympathy and occasional cheque eked out my narrow stipend, and enabled me to grapple with that hydra-headed Population.

'Tommy,' she said to me one day, 'you don't look at all the thing. You are sallow and flabby in the cheeks, and hollow below the eyes.'

The account of my personal appearance was not flattering, but it was correct.

'So I shall trot you off to the Continent, my dear boy, as soon as the rector will give you a holiday ; and I shall give you a cheque for fifty pounds to pay your expenses.'

I faltered my acknowledgments.

'But remember, Thomas, that you can't both have your cake and eat it. I shall have very few fifties to leave you, my dear boy, but I do not like you to wait for them until I am gone. Fifty pounds may do you more good now than it might by and by. I should like to see you as strong as when you went to the East-end. Only you will be fifty pounds poorer than would otherwise be the case by and by.'

I did not argue the matter with my good aunt. Fifty pounds of her little stock meant a diminution of her annual income to the extent of some thirty or forty shillings, and I knew that this could be spared and be a real luxury to her to invest it in my health and welfare. I therefore very cheerfully allowed her to add this to many other kindnesses, and took myself to the delightful employment of settling my plans.

I set about these plans in a very systematic manner. I studied maps with the voracity of a Uhlan. I invested in a *Bradshaw*, and in *Murrays* to any extent you like. Day by day I went by the Underground to the British Museum to look at maps, pictures, books. I wrote to all my travelled friends to glean all the experience I could. Instead of one tour, I was qualifying myself for a dozen. I could have electrified an examiner by my knowledge of the map of Europe. I was always covering half-sheets of note-paper with skeleton tours. My only embarrassment arose from the endeavour to bring my tour

within reasonable limits of time and money. On the whole, I thought I would go through Switzerland and the Italian lakes, then to Venice, and back through the Tyrol. Only when at Venice one really must go on to Florence, and to Rome, and to Naples. Then it would be so pleasant to run on to Cyprus—everybody just then was going on to Cyprus ; and then it would be only a few days to Egypt, to Palestine, to the isles of Greece. Ah, delusive visions, too fond, too vain ! I little thought that they were all to end in the bathos of a return-ticket.

The night came when I started by the mail-train to make the night passage between Dover and Calais. Of course I was going to Paris. Nearly every journey in the world leads through Paris, just as all roads went to Rome. As I paced the railway-platform I observed a gentleman also pacing the platform. He was a good-looking man, and also he looked good ; two things which do not always go together. He had fine clear-cut features and dreamy smiling eyes. I was glad to find myself seated opposite to him in a smoking-carriage. Not that I really cared anything about smoking, but I thought that to light up a cigar would be an appropriate prelude to my extensive travels.

It was very remarkable how pleasantly that fellow and I got on. With some fellows you do get on ; with other fellows you can never get on at all. You vote them cads from the very commencement. I expect that there are such things as elective affinities between men and men. Now this young fellow was one of the frankest and most unreserved men whom I had ever met. He spoke 'with effusion.' He seemed to be incapable of anything like reticence. In reality he was not a young man ;

but though there were a few touches of gray in his hair, his mien and manners were young, with a most engaging simplicity; and once or twice a suspicion crossed my mind that he might be just a shade stupid. He told me his little history. It is very odd how often in railway-carriages I have met with people who insist on telling me their little histories and mysteries—hold me, like that Ancient Mariner, with their ‘glittering eye.’

His history was very simple. He was a clerk in one of the higher ranges of the Civil Service. He was nobody, but his father had been the younger son of an honourable, and the honourable had been the younger son of a lord, and the lord had been the eldest son of an earl. All semblance of a title had been absorbed; but still he belonged to a great house; and the head of the house, recognising his family duties, had got him a nomination to a good appointment; and he had had to ‘swot’ with a crammer, and at last got through. He had never quite paid off all his Oxford debts from that day to this; and this third cousin, the earl, kept a very tight hand on him, and he had to pay so much away every quarter from his stipend, and to insure his life, and to report himself regularly to his august relative. Still he did happen to find himself in possession of a surplus fifty-pound note, and had obtained his relative’s permission to spend his holiday on the Continent.

It really seemed not improbable that I and this agreeable new acquaintance should see a good deal of each other. We had the same amount of tether in the way both of coin and furlough. We had each taken a ticket to Paris. From Paris the whole world lay before us, to roam where we listed.

He really was a very kind-hearted man. A little incident revealed this to me. When we got to Dover we found that the storm-signals were up; and one weather-beaten tar, whose opinion we consulted, said that it would take three men to hold the captain’s hat on. However, we determined to go on; but ‘the silver streak’ showed itself in a very turbulent mood. One old gentleman observed to me that he had been to the West Indies and back, and had never suffered so much. Mr. Wyvill had descended into the cabin to fortify himself with brandy-and-water, while I had taken my seat on the open deck and stared intently at the funnel, which I was told was an infallible specific against sea-sickness. Just as I was about to try this truly scientific experiment, a big wave swept over the deck and completely enveloped me in a sheet of water. I was drenched through and through; not a thread or shred was dry.

‘Well, old man’—it is astonishing how quickly a traveller’s intimacy progresses—‘how are you getting on?’

I explained that I wasn’t getting on at all. I was wet through and through.

‘O, sea-water never hurts a fellow; you never catch cold from sea-water.’

This is, I know, a prevalent opinion; but it is as ‘the Pelagians do vainly talk.’ All I can say is, let a man sit thoroughly wet through for a couple of hours, with the additional advantage of a keen night wind cutting through him, and he will stand as good a chance of a cold as any lunatic could desire. What I know is, that when we arrived at Calais I found myself unable to proceed. The train in correspondence with the boat was starting almost at once,

and there was neither time nor opportunity to change one's clothes properly. I determined to stop that night at Calais. I urged my good-natured companion not to lose any time, but to go on with the train; but he obstinately refused to separate his travelling fortunes from my own.

It was really very good of him. The journey and the wetting had upset the British parson much more than he had felt disposed to show. So we had a quiet day at Calais, which is just the sort of place for a quiet day; went to the church, and saw some of the cannon-balls which the English had thrown in; paced along the endless tree-planted walks; fraternised with the great Gallic nation at various *cafés*; revived our recollections of Beau Brummell; made part of a prolonged *table d'hôte*; and got very comfortably into Paris next day. We did not intend to do very much at Paris. Three days were all that we allowed ourselves. For, as we acutely argued, a man can run over at any time to Paris; but we cannot very often make a prolonged tour, and we must make the best of the opportunity. Certainly the companionship of such a docile good-natured fellow was, up to the present time, a decided help to me.

But the morning after our arrival in Paris he came into my bedroom, next his own, in a most melancholy and distracted manner. It was just the woebegone expression of the man who came into Priam's bedchamber at the dead of night, and told him that half his Troy was burned. He was utterly disconcerted; and although his manner was to treat a thing lightly and pass it off, I saw that he was disconcerted.

'It's all U-P with me, old man.'

'What's the row now?'

'Lost all my money, that's all.'

'That's beastly hard lines.'

'I should think so, slightly.'

'What do you mean to do now?'

'I am sure I don't know. I am cleaned out, and can't go on. I hardly know if I have got enough money to go home with.'

'How do you suppose it happened?'

'I really can't tell. I put my fifty pounds—a five-pound note and a *rouleau* of napoleons, which I was told were the proper things to take with me—in my pocket-book, and the pocket-book itself into a coat-pocket. I had enough money in my purse to carry me as far as Paris; and going to get my money just now, I found that it was all gone.'

'Could you have left it at home or at the money-changer's?'

'I don't think so. I felt the pocket-book all safe when I was in the train.'

'I thought there were one or two queer fellows in the railway-carriage.'

'Yes; and so there were in the steamboat. And, for the matter of that, I did not at all like the appearance of the cad who sat next to me at the *table d'hôte* at Calais.'

'And you'll have to give up the idea of Milan and Florence and Venice?'

'Yes; and the Tyrol and Cyprus and Constantinople, and what not.'

'What a grind!'

'What a grind!'

'Well, we had better have a cup of coffee. Then we'll go and have our *déjeuner* on the Boulevard des Italiens, and see something of Paris; and we will settle next day what is to be done.'

So we went about; and for a man who was demi-semi-ruined he certainly took life cheerfully, and made a very good breakfast. We did some of the sights, and had a drive in the Bois, and dined,

and heard some good and cheap music in the evening. The very soil and air of France make people light-hearted. But the last thing at night he looked horribly grave, and said that he was very sorry that he could not go on to Switzerland with me.

How could I help this nice pleasant fellow—so gentlemanly, so kind, so helpless? It at once came into my mind that I really must help him if I possibly could, but it was so difficult to see how. I had so little money, and I wanted it all for myself. My professional means were practically mortgaged to my tradesmen, and I had only my aunt's *douceur*. I had once been greatly impressed with a motto which ran thus: Do all the good you can, in all the ways you can, to all the people you can. Sympathy I had in abundance with my new-found friend; but I was ashamed to give a mere expression of sympathy unless I could accompany it with something substantial. I offered all the condolence I could, and then took my bed-candle and went up-stairs.

But somehow I could not rest. Wyvill was such a good fellow evidently. No mistake about him. It was so hard that he should lose both his money and his holiday. Of course I called him an ass for his stupidity in losing that pocket-book; but I instantly retracted the derogatory expression. There was something about Wyvill which quite released him from the category of asses.

Somehow or other a thought had been working in my mind for a little while; a new intention began slowly to evolve itself.

'Now, Jones, my boy,' I said to myself, in the remonstrating style of soliloquy in which I sometimes indulged, 'you have got an opportunity, if you will only cast about for the ways and means, of doing a

real kindness once in your life. It may be many years before you have such another chance. Put your best foot forward and try what you can do.'

The idea which occurred to me was that I might take a return-ticket. I had noticed the advertisement of return-tickets to Switzerland in that morning's *Galignani*. What I had originally intended and plotted out, as has been set forth, was to take a regular little tour. How many hours had I spent enjoyably over *Bradshaw* and *Murray*! I suppose that the fruition of enjoyment could hardly equal the felicity of planning. And now that ominous and ever-recurring slip was to come off betwixt the cup and my lip. My original intention had been to go to Switzerland by way of Paris, and return by the Rhine, or else take a wider sweep and come back through Germany. Now if I drew in my wings and took things on a diminished scale, I certainly might be able to save some twenty pounds. The great expense in travelling is, of course, the locomotion. If I took a return-ticket I should have less ground to travel over, and might also economise money by staying *en pension* instead of staying at a series of hotels. It would be at least twenty pounds saved; and twenty pounds would enable this honest fellow to have his holiday, and save him from returning home in discomfort and disappointment.

I had been feeling rather feverish and upset, partly from the Channel wetting and partly with this question, which had been opened up to me; but directly I had settled it I sweetly slept the sleep of the just.

I had made up my mind, in the case of this man, to do as I would be done by. 'But though on pleasure I was bent, I had a frugal mind.' If any of his relatives liked to help him out of the bog, such a

relative would be welcome to my share of moral satisfaction arising from a virtuous action.

‘Don’t you think your great friend, that lord of a cousin, would help you if you were to write or telegraph to him?’

‘Old man,’ returned Wyvill, an absurd way of addressing his junior which I could never persuade him to leave off, ‘I wouldn’t have him know it for all the world. I should never hear the last of it. It is the sort of thing which he could never forgive. We should quarrel for life.’

Then I made my proposition to him. I can really claim no merit for making it. It seemed to me as easy and natural as possible. I was only doing for him what I felt sure he would do for me under similar circumstances.

‘Look here, Mr. Wyvill,’ I said. ‘I have just got fifty pounds. I’ll lend you half of it with pleasure, and we will continue our journey as long as our money holds out.’

I was a perfect master of all the pecuniary calculations of a tour. I was brimful of information. Tap me, and a pellucid stream of fiscal information on tourist subjects would flow out.

‘We could run about Switzerland a good deal,’ I continued. ‘It is not a big country, after all, and the railways are all cheap and handy. And then we can go and live *en pension* for a few weeks, if we want to economise, and spin out the time very well.’

I will not say how much Mr. Wyvill thanked me. But he did thank me a great deal, a great deal more than was necessary. He explained his position to me, which was quite unnecessary, and made it clear that my little loan would be returned by Christmas.

So the train took us through the flat country of France, until,

high, in the air, like light clouds, we saw the snowy summits of distant mountains. We really saw a good deal of Switzerland, boated on lakes and climbed up mountains. Remembering that we were not so rich as we thought ourselves a little while back, we did a great deal more walking than we should otherwise have done, which was, of course, all the better for us. I remember especially that, having gone up to Righi one day, we sailed in the sunset along the Lake of Lucerne, and stopped to sleep at Fluelen. Next day we walked through the St. Gothard Pass, and got as far as Bellinzona, looking down upon the wondrous opening view of the soft Italian country; and so on through chestnut woods, with the sound of waterfalls in our ears. Then we came to an exquisite lake set, gem-like, amid the mountains. It was a kind of enchanted land. There was an hotel on the borders of the lake which had once been a monastery, and it had now its cool corridors and arcades. The living rooms were vast; and so skilful were the contrivances for modifying the heat, that, though that summer was a hot one, we were cool enough, especially with the assistance of unlimited iced lemonade.

It seemed to me that this lonely region was just the place where we could most happily while away our holiday, and that we could hardly light upon better quarters than where we were. Our bill for two days was rather stiff. I went to the landlord of the hotel, whom I found a most intelligent and civil fellow, and told him that we meant to stay for some little time, and that if he were willing to take us on *pension* terms instead of hotel terms, we were very content to stay with him. A very reasonable agreement was soon arrived at, and the mention of this circum-

stance may perhaps put some of my readers up to a wrinkle if they have 'outrun the constable' on their travels. Neither did the reduced terms imply any reduced fare. At the *table d'hôte* we had all things in common, and very good commons they were.

I really believe that this particular way of spending a holiday was much better for me than the plan which I had originally proposed to myself. Of course it would be more ambitious to climb Mont Blanc or Monte Rosa, and it would be very nice to go out to Cyprus or Roumelia. But all this implied activity and not rest, and rest was what I wanted. There was something heavenly in those sapphire skies, in the lemon-groves, in the brooding mountain shadows cast over the lake. It was Mignon's country. Let me quote Dr. Shuldham's translation of Göthe's song:

' Know'st thou the land where the spiced
citron blows?
In foliage dark the golden orange glows.
A gentle wind breathes from the deep-
blue sky,
The myrtle stands so still, the laurel-
branch so high.
Know'st thou it well? O there with thee
Would I, my heart's beloved, gladly flee.
Know'st thou the house, with pillared
porches tall
Glitters each room, and broadly gleams
the hall:
Where sculptured statues meet with
stony stare
Thy gaze? Who caused thy tears, O
child of care?
Know'st thou it well? O, there with
thee
Would I, my strong protector, gladly flee.
The mountain-path in cloudland dost
thou know,
Where seeks the mule his footing in the
snow;
There dwells in caves the dragon's an-
cient brood;
There leans the rock, and o'er it leaps the
flood.
Know'st thou it well? There, there with
thee,
O guide my footsteps! Father, come
with me!'

Dear Wilhelm Meister! Reading that enchanted page I would

gladly renew the possibilities of adventurous youth. I thought that life's romance was all over for the drone of an East-end curate. But it was not so to be.

One afternoon, coming back from an excursion from some 'mountain-path in cloudland,' we saw signs of some extra bit of business and excitement about our hotel. There was a crowd about the archway that led into the central court of our hotel. In the court there was a large travelling carriage, about which groups and hangers-on were clustered admiringly; and we were told that an English *milor* and some gracious ladies had arrived that day.

By and by Wyvill came into my room in a state of considerable excitement. It was a very pleasant room with an outlook on the lake, which seemed like a gorgeous picture set in a frame. My little iron bed was stowed away in a corner, and across it a curtain, which being drawn converted my room into a snugger, if we wished to retreat from the vast public rooms. Here we drank the wine of the country—very pleasant and cheap—and smoked mild cigarettes. Here Wyvill found me, breaking in somewhat impetuously for a man of his languid nature.

' Who on earth do you think has come in that travelling carriage?'

' Not knowing, can't say.'

' It's my cousin, Lord Dash!'

' You don't mean it! That earl who looks so sharp after you?'

' The same. Isn't it a nuisance?'

' An awful nuisance.'

And yet it seemed to me rather hard that the Earl of Dash should be voted a nuisance. The helpless cousin, Frederick Wyvill, was all the better for this great connection, and the supervision which this great connection was kind enough to exercise over him. Wyvill's

great anxiety evidently was that the earl, being on the spot, was bound to find out all about the important loss of that fifty pounds. I represented to him that this accident was really no particular business of Lord Dash's; that Lord Dash could not know it unless he chose to tell him, and he was under no necessity of telling him if he did not choose.

'But you don't know that man's powers of wiggling; you don't know that man's powers of wiggling,' he kept on saying; 'and he's sure to get it out of me, quite sure.'

He felt himself powerless to conceal anything from the basilisk eyes of the lordly Dash. He was sure 'it would all come out.' Wyvill was a sort of man who always wanted some other sort of man to exercise an ascendancy over him. His notion was that he had better cut and run for it. But the earl might have already detected his presence. Besides, he had no money to enable him to run away.

That afternoon I had a distant view of the noble lord extending three patronising fingers to Wyvill, who received them in a bashful and penitential manner. I wondered whether he and his daughters would make their appearance at the *table d'hôte*. But such a great man as the earl of course thought fit to dine in his own private apartments, and Wyvill had to dine with them. He did not have half so good a dinner, or half so lively a dinner, as we had in the *salle-à-manger*; and he had to pay four or five times as much for it. Thus it happens in this world that one man's impecuniosity is balanced by another's abundance. Our landlord was kind to us, but he took it out of the noble lord.

We discussed matters over some *Asti spumante*. Wyvill told me that the dinner was dull, and that

his noble relative felt it dull, and intended to grace the *table d'hôte* with his right honourable presence next day. So he came in with his daughters next day, two bright, pleasant, unaffected girls. Wyvill introduced me to them and to the earl. The noble lord was a very shrewd old man; he evidently looked upon his cousin as being partially imbecile, and there was a good deal of satire mixed up with any remarks which he addressed to him. The earl was full of anecdotes and observation; evidently a man who was painfully anxious to do right, benevolent and high-principled. He came as little near the idea of a bloated aristocrat as any man whom I had ever seen.

It so happened that I saw a good deal of Lord Dash and his people. There is no place like an hotel by an Italian lake for getting up intimacies. You take your meals together, you sit in the drawing-room together, you climb the hills and boat on the lake together. I really was very much interested and amused by the earl's remarks. He noticed this, and gave me plenty of them. As for Wyvill, he evidently shirked his noble relative. He did not care for autobiographical remarks of an improving tendency. He had the bad taste not to care for his cousinesses, if I may coin a word which is much wanted in the language. He was long and lazy. He would go in a boat if he was not required to pull; or climb a mountain if he could do it on a mule's back. *Voilà tout*. So he took heavily to smoking and billiards, while I escorted the young ladies, with or without their noble sire, over the lake or up the heights.

Lady Gertrude and Lady Alice had been travelling for some time. I soon saw how much ground

they had travelled, and they must also have seen how little I had done myself. These young ladies nicely balanced each other. Each supplied a counteractive principle to the other; and if I flirted with the Gertrude I was recalled to my senses by the Alice. Fortunately I had read travel-books so extensively that I was able to hold my own when we discussed matters. Only I confess that when I heard their description of regions which I longed to traverse, which I had studied in my waking hours, had pictured in my dreams, with a sense of irritation I started impatiently to my feet, and remembered remorselessly that I was bound in the fetters of a return-ticket, and that any progress was barred by my inexorable fate. I often vengefully contemplated that obnoxious little document; I execrated it, I shook my fist at it, once I stamped it vindictively under foot, and was only restrained by prudential motives from altogether destroying it. It needed a frequent glance at Wyvill's placid happy countenance, drinking in the beauty and freshness of the heavens and the earth, to reconcile me to the painful limits imposed on me by the return-ticket. Under the melancholy circumstances I felt myself in some sort of way a ticket-of-leave man.

Before the full term of my holiday was over I was summoned home by my rector, who explained as an excuse that the population was growing with a rapidity which was simply frightful. Not content with an extraordinary average of births, the parish had imported a mighty influx of labourers for dock extension or something of that sort. The rector wrote in an agitated frame of mind, and evidently in a state of collapse. It was very hard lines; but the recall was peremptory, and, to say the

truth, in spite of that admirable system of balances and compensations, Lady Gertrude was beginning seriously to assail my peace of mind. When I announced my intention of a speedy return—through the same flat French country, through the same inevitable Paris—that good fellow Wyvill said that he must accompany me. As he had another ten days to run, I would not allow this, and left him pathetically lamenting that when he no longer had me to back him up he was sure that 'the murder would out.'

I reached home, and resumed the heavy routine of my East-end duties. Sometimes I thought of those days by the enchanted lake; but it was a kind of reverie in which I hardly dared to indulge for long. One day, however, ten months afterwards, when that pleasant interlude was almost vanishing from my memory, I received the following letter from my Lord Dash:

'Dashwood Park, May 1.

My dear Mr. Jones,—The living of Dashwood in my gift is just vacant, and I give myself the pleasure of offering it to you. In value it is close on nine hundred a year, and the grounds adjoin my own. Of course it is a great point with us to have a pleasant neighbour, which will be insured in your case. But I must tell you that this is not the real reason which induces me to offer you preferment. I have been informed by my excellent but careless kinsman, Frederick Wyvill, of your most kind and generous behaviour to him, for which I thank you very much, and which we both thoroughly appreciate. I hope you will write very soon, and tell me that you accept.—Yours very faithfully,

DASH.'

The offer was too good to be re-

fused. The aunt who thought that I had hardly seen the value of my money was delighted when I told the story to her, and I am sure that she would tell me in any case that I had done the right thing.

Wyvill and I used to interchange occasional letters, and in more than one he hinted at our resuming, under happier auspices, that abridged journey to foreign parts. At last there came a time when I wrote to him to say that I really was going to undertake

something approximating to the 'grand tour.' I added that I should be favoured with a companion who was at once handsomer and more helpless than himself; but that for such a rare combination I should be obliged to have recourse to one of the opposite sex. In fact, Lady Gertrude and I were about to make a honeymoon tour.

But thinking of good old Wyvill, I have written a sermon on this text: 'Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.'

Down the quiet country road, before you reach the lofty ridge,
Where the birch-tree, first awakened to the morning's low breath,
 swings,
I oft-times sit in silence on the small moss-covered bridge,
Near the little shady nook where the blackbird sings.

There the spreading trees meet o'er me, and I hear no harsh voice
calling,
Whilst his sweetness to my fancy's dream a sacred feeling brings,
As it mingles with the rippling of the brook o'er pebbles falling
In the little shady nook where the blackbird sings.

There the ivy climbs the highest of the lofty trees beside me,
And the bluebell like a carpet in the early summer springs;
In the thorn I need but clamber, and the snowy bloom would hide me
In the little shady nook where the blackbird sings.

Where the trout, his supper seeking, in the sunny beam is leaping,
And the pool is brought to life again in many glistening rings,
When the day seems growing fainter, and the shadows onward creeping,
In the little shady nook where the blackbird sings.

When the swallows dart like spirits underneath the narrow arches,
And the air a sweetened perfume like the almond round me flings,
And I dream of holy quiet as I watch the feathery larches
In the little shady nook where the blackbird sings.

O, if I could only tell you what unbroken heartfelt pleasure
 Ever waits me in this spot, to which my thought so fondly clings,
 You would follow me, nor wonder 'tis my only pleasant leisure,
 By the little shady nook where the blackbird sings !

T. D.

MRS. LANCASTER'S RIVAL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS IN HER OWN CHATEAU.'

CHAPTER XXI.

FLORA'S OLD FRIEND.

THE road down Pensand Combe, through most of its course, ran along close to the edge of the wooded cliff that overhung the creek; but here and there it branched off, making a small angle inland, and passing between a tall field hedge on one side, and a wild mass of brambles on the other, or farther down, between low stone walls, with odd little nooks of garden niched in behind them. There were one or two sharp corners, and Dick, as he went tearing recklessly down, almost ran into two people who were coming round one of these. He pulled up suddenly, very much to the pony's surprise, and got down to speak to them; for they were Randal Hawke and Flora Lancaster.

'Do you want to break our necks, and your own too?' said Randal.

He looked pale and cross, and his temper was not improved by Dick's glance at Flora, which, quick as it was, meant pity and surprise. For Dick was startled and shocked by the worn strained misery in Flora's face; she looked years older than when he and she had parted at St. Denys only a few weeks before.

'Have you taken Miss Ashley home?' said Randal, in the same sharp tone.

Dick looked hard at him, and there was something in his eyes

which reminded Randal that he was making a fool of himself in giving up his usual coolness of manner. It was hardly possible—such a stupid boyish fellow—but Dick at that moment looked as if he might be dangerous.

'If you have,' said Randal, 'I'm much obliged to you. I had to leave her for a few minutes, and I suppose she was tired of waiting. You stepped in at the nick of time.'

'Yes,' said Dick. 'Her walking back to the Castle seemed rather hopeless. She is safe there now. Mrs. Lancaster, are you going to walk back to St. Denys?'

'Yes,' said Flora. 'There is no other way.'

She spoke in a low voice, rather dreamily, and without looking at him. Her eyes had wandered away to the high ground on the other side of the Combe.

'Will you let me row you round to St. Denys?' said Dick. 'I am going back at once, if you won't be cold on the water.'

'You are a bold fellow, Dick. Fish and all?' said Randal, with a touch of his usual mockery, and a deliberate scanning of Dick from head to foot. 'You are hardly got up for the occasion; but as Miss Ashley put up with you, perhaps Mrs. Lancaster will.'

'I shouldn't wonder,' said Dick. 'Will you?' to Flora.

'Thank you. I shall be very glad,' said Flora.

'You have nothing but a fishing-boat there, have you?' said

Randal. 'Take our boat. You will find it down there. I will send for it to-morrow.'

'That is just what I thought of doing,' said Dick.

'O, no,' said Flora, suddenly interfering. 'Let us have the fishing-boat, please. I like it much better.'

An odd half-angry smile curled Randal's lip.

Dick answered her quite gravely,

'No, that's impossible. It would spoil your clothes;' and Flora said no more.

'Good-bye,' said Randal. 'I shall see you some day, Dick. Good-bye, Mrs. Lancaster.'

They parted without any shaking of hands. Randal lifted his hat, Dick nodded, and Flora bowed without looking at him. He walked away with light quick steps up the lane, leaving the little group standing there; Dick, Flora, Daniel Fenner's cart and pony.

Some of Dick's disgust and indignation escaped him in mutterings as he turned to pull in a strap that had loosened itself.

'To answer him civilly, and not take him by the collar and pitch him over the edge into the mud yonder! I see your little game, Mr. Randal, and I'll be hanged if— Will you get into the cart?' he said to Flora, suddenly forgetting Randal in sympathy with her. 'I'll drive gently, and it won't shake you much.'

'I would rather walk, thank you,' said Flora.

'Very well. Then I'll lead the pony; it is not far, after all,' said Dick.

They walked one on each side of the cart, and neither of them spoke till they reached the beach. Flora seemed to be in a sort of waking dream, and Dick felt too much real sorrow, too much respect for his old love in her

trouble, to make conversation about nothing. He thought it a curiously providential thing that he should have met her on this fatal afternoon—he, the only person who knew her secret, and could understand what she must feel. Though how any woman could care for that smooth villain Randal Hawke, with his horrid manners, his odious scented neatness, his second-rate dandyism, Dick confessed himself unable to understand.

Randal's boat had been brought down to the ferry, and was lying there at the little landing-place. Those two were soon out on the open river, alone together in the wild cloudy evening. Flora sat in a stooping attitude, with her eyes bent down, and her shawl drawn tight round her shoulders. Dick's pulling was easy work, going down with the tide, and the light boat darted through the water. Presently Flora leaned forward, and dipped her fingers into the small gray-green waves that came washing up round them.

'Do you remember,' she said—they were almost the first words she had spoken to Dick since they parted with Randal—'how you fell into the water that night at Morebay?'

'Yes,' said Dick. He remembered too, sadly enough, how she had reminded him of that before, when he met her on the hill that evening, and carried her parcel, and lingered at her gate in the lovely summer twilight. How happy she had been then, poor Flora, carrying on an innocent little flirtation with her old friend, and keeping her precious secret in the background all the time!

'I suppose you were not in the water long enough to know what drowning is like?' Flora went on.

'Why, no. Those fellows had me out almost before I was in.'

'They say it is a very peaceful easy death,' said Flora, staring down into the depths of the Penyr, and dabbling with her fingers in a tiny wave-crest.

'Don't believe them,' said Dick. 'It is horrid choking agony; few things worse. I've heard that from people who really have been almost drowned.'

'But it is very soon over.'

'It seems like hours, like a lifetime.'

'Well,' said Flora, with a sigh, 'the idea of it is most tempting. Look at this nice gentle water; not even cold. Just a plunge, and I believe one's unhappiness would be over for ever. Yes, I do think so; for in that other world there can be no such cruelty as there is here. Just a plunge down into these green depths—and I know how strong the currents are, they would carry one right out to sea.'

Dick was a perfectly brave man, as far at least as physical courage is concerned. He was even rashly brave sometimes; but at that moment he was terrified. Flora's extraordinary calmness, the dreamy fascinated gaze that she fixed on the water, the longing way in which she drew her fingers through it,—all this made him feel that there was imminent danger of her throwing herself suddenly in. He spoke, however, in the coolest quietest manner, even with a smile on his face.

'But suppose you did throw yourself in, you don't think you would be drowned here, do you?'

'What could prevent it?' said Flora, without raising her eyes.

'I should prevent it,' answered Dick. 'My coat is off already. I should instantly dive after you, get hold of you, and swim with you to that bank. I am one of the best swimmers in the world.

We should both get a good wetting, and perhaps catch bad colds. That's all. So when you think of attempting it, let me know.'

Dick spoke with a pleasant smile; he evidently took it all as a joke.

'O Dick!' cried Flora suddenly and painfully. 'You are so cruel; but of course you don't understand.'

Her interest in the water had suddenly ceased; she buried her face in her hands, and rocked herself gently, like a woman in great trouble. 'I can't bear it,' she sighed; but Dick just caught the despairing words.

'I do understand, though,' he said, 'only too well. What tries me is to see you wasting your regret on a worthless scoundrel who only deserves a horse-whipping, and may perhaps get his deserts in time.'

'O, remember that I trusted you,' said Flora. 'It is a secret; nobody else knows.'

Dick was silent, and she presently went on:

'I have suspected it for some days, but to-day on the beach it was made quite clear to me. He told me he must marry some one with money, and we know what that means. Don't you see, Dick? He is going to marry Miss Ashley.'

'O, is he?' said Dick.

'He will have no trouble there; she likes him quite enough. He made sure of that before he told me; and he would not have told me now, if I had not made him. O, to think of it! What shall I do!'

'I could tell you that,' said Dick, 'but of course you wouldn't listen.'

'I am listening. Go on.'

'First of all,' said Dick, with great decision, 'you should thank God for setting you free in time from one of the most rascally

seamps in England.' Then you should forget all about him, and be as cheerful as if he had never existed.'

'Ah, you can't mend your life as you would mend your glove,' said Flora, shaking her head.

'It will take a little patience, of course,' said Dick, rather proud of his preaching, 'but you will do it in time. Do you know, when you first told me about him, that day in the Combe, I knew he was a liar.'

'Did you?' said Flora wearily.

It seemed to Dick that he had better not say any more; the poor woman had been too much tried, and perhaps silence was best for her. She sat with her head drooped and her hands clasped, thinking or dreaming, and this continued till they reached the quay.

Dick felt very thankful, as he helped Flora on shore, that she was safe there. He had come to the conclusion that the water was the worst place for any one in trouble of mind, like hers; it seemed such a quiet easy refuge close at hand. He thought it would be a long time before he took any one out again, under such circumstances. The fishwomen and all the waterside people stared with great interest at these two, going about together once more.

Dick nodded to many old friends, as he led Flora up the slippery steps and the steep winding lanes of St. Denys. She hardly spoke till they had reached the gate of Rose Cottage, where they had parted so many times before, and in such a different way.

'Wait a minute. I want to speak to you,' she said. 'Tell me, is she a nice girl?'

'Yes,' said Dick. 'I'm sure she is a nice girl.'

'Then she ought to be saved from this.'

Dick's own mind had been occupied with the same subject, but he did not quite see his way, and he told Mrs. Lancaster so. She looked at him with wild puzzled eyes, as they stood there together in the gray evening. One long golden curl of her hair had shaken itself down, and was lying on her shoulder, but it did not look pretty; it only added a little dishevelled untidiness to her sad looks. Dick was not the least bit in love with her now. He only felt most heartily sorry for his old friend.

'Who is to save her?' said Flora.

'To tell you the truth, I don't know,' said Dick. 'But let me ask you this. Would you mind my telling aunt Kate all about it, and finding out what she thinks? She is very clever; she might hit on some way, without your being pulled into it at all. You can trust her, I assure you.'

'I know I can,' said Flora. 'My brain is in such a strange whirl that I can't think properly. I am all in confusion. You must forgive me.'

'I can fancy that,' said Dick.

He waited kindly and patiently for a minute or two, till Flora spoke again.

'I don't know whether it is right or wrong; but Miss Northcote will know. You may tell her. As to me—it doesn't matter about me. If I was a Roman Catholic, I could go into a convent. As I'm not, I must stay at Rose Cottage. Good-night, Dick. You have been very good to me.'

She gave him her hand with a faint smile that was sadder than any sadness.

'Good-night,' he said. 'You may always depend on me.'

He watched her till she had gone in at the house-door, and

closed it behind her. Then he hurried up the hill towards home.

After dinner that evening, Miss Northcote was sitting at work by her lamp in the drawing-room, when Dick came in and sat down near her at the table.

'You look very quiet and comfortable,' he said, 'but do you know that you are in the midst of a sensation novel?'

'What do you mean, Dick?' said his aunt, looking up.

'I'll tell you all about it, beginning at the very beginning, which was before I went to Yorkshire.'

In the long story which followed on this, what surprised Miss Northcote most was the fact of Randal Hawke's engagement to Mrs. Lancaster. This she seemed hardly able to believe. The rest of the story was far less startling. Randal's intention of marrying 'money' in the person of Mabel Ashley seemed only natural in a man of his kind. When Dick described the manner in which he had comforted Flora in the boat, Miss Northcote could not help smiling.

'If she cared for him,' said she, 'which probably she did, the period of thankfulness won't come for some time yet. Poor thing! I am afraid your little sermon was wasted, Dick. What a sad story it is, though! and how very heartless Randal must be! I don't wonder that Anthony dislikes him.'

'No, indeed,' said Dick. 'And now comes the question—is there any way of nipping his beautiful plan in the bud?'

Kate leaned back in her chair, gazed at Dick, and considered.

'Really, I don't know,' she said. 'Miss Ashley belongs to them, you see. Nobody has any right to interfere; she is the General's ward, and we can't take

her out of his hands. She can't be got away from Pensand, and as long as she is there of course Randal has it all his own way. I believe she is contented too; for I saw them driving together one day, and certainly she looked quite happy. And Randal may be really attached to her: we don't know. One can't imagine that he would ever have done anything so romantic as to marry Mrs. Lancaster.'

'Then why did he engage himself to her? She has been abominably used,' said Dick. 'I don't see that he would be doing anything so romantic, as you call it. Other people besides Randal—'

'Yes, I know,' said Kate. 'But now I am thinking about Miss Ashley. What can we do? It is no business of ours, you see. I'll go and call again, if you like. That will remind her that there are other people in the world besides Randal and his father. But when you really have no excuse for interfering—'

Dick looked discontented. After a few minutes' silence he broke out rather angrily,

'Of course, I know it is not the first time an engagement has been broken off, though I never saw such a horrid instance of it. But the worst of it is the fellow being such a liar, behaving all through in such a wretched cowardly way, and braving it out with that insolent manner of his. I should like to make the whole thing public; and I would too, if it were not for Flora. She wouldn't like it, poor thing.'

'No, I should think not,' said Kate. 'And, after all, she is the first person to be considered. Miss Ashley, poor girl, I don't know how it is, but I can't get up any very deep interest in her, though Anthony is so fond of her, and you seem to like her too. Anthony,

by the bye! he might influence her, if nobody else could. He is the only person that goes often to the Castle. And he dislikes Randal quite enough already, without knowing Mrs. Lancaster's story. I'm going to Carweston soon, and I'll try to find out whether he has any idea of this plan of Randal's.'

'Yes, you might do that,' said Dick.

There was another long pause, and then he went on:

'I do care what becomes of that girl. There is something rather taking about her, poor little thing. I am sorry for her now, just as I was when we travelled down together, only more so.'

'You have forgiven the little airs she gave herself when we called that day,' said Miss Northcote.

'O dear, yes; it was only shyness. One soon gets over that sort of thing,' said Dick.

He took up a book that he had been reading, and began to turn over the leaves. Kate watched him over her knitting, with a wondering doubtful smile. How very strange, she thought, if that little dark girl was to take possession, one after the other, of both Mrs. Lancaster's lovers! She hardly knew why this fancy came into her head, for Dick showed no consciousness. And being, with all his faults, an utterly unmercenary creature, his aunt felt sure that the conquest, if it was made, would be Mabel's own.

CHAPTER XXII.

MOREBAY.

RANDAL did his very best to efface from Mabel's mind any disagreeable impression which that afternoon might have left on it.

He told her he was very sorry, and hoped that Dick Northcote had taken good care of her, in the easiest and pleasantest way.

'What became of poor Mrs. Lancaster? Did she go home?' said Mabel.

'She meant to walk home,' said Randal; 'but as we came up the Combe together, we met Dick and his cart rattling down. By the bye, you must have been shaken to pieces. So I left her in his charge, and he was going to pull her round to St. Denys in our boat. That would be less tiring than such a long walk.'

'And was it all right?' said Mabel. 'Was he pleased?'

'Pleased?' said Randal, looking at her.

'I thought you seemed to hint that he had not been quite nice to her. I fancied that was what distressed her.'

Mabel coloured, and wished she had not asked any questions. They seemed such an odd jumble altogether, these relations of Randal and Dick and Mrs. Lancaster. She was sorry to show any curiosity about them.

'O,' said Randal, 'it was not Dick entirely; she has lots of things on her mind.'

To do him justice, he spoke gravely enough about Flora, though of course no one could have guessed from his manner that he, and no one else, was to be blamed for her unhappiness. But he did not seem inclined to say any more about her, and Mabel did not ask.

For several days after this Mabel saw no one but her companions at Pensand. The General left her and Randal very much alone together, and by this strange arrangement, as it might well have seemed to most people, they grew more intimate day by day. There were some subjects that they avoided:

they did not talk of their neighbours; but somehow there always was plenty to talk about, and Randal never let Mabel be dull. She was amused and cheerful, and yet not quite happy, through those soft August days. Things that Randal said did not always ring true; Mabel's instincts rebelled sometimes, though she only scolded herself for being silly. Nearly every day he took her out for a drive; they went far away into the country, through miles of lovely winding roads and lanes, where a few trees were just beginning to show a touch of gold after the long hot summer; far up the rivers, sometimes making a little picnic of their own on some terraced bank where the fern was fading. They had no more boating. Randal seemed to have taken a dislike to the river and the Combe, where he had gone through so much that was unpleasant.

Perhaps he could hardly have explained to himself why he did not speak to Mabel, and make it quite sure. With all his assurance, possibly he still felt a little doubtful of her answer, and he wanted her to be perfectly used to him, and accustomed to expect everything from him, before he ran such a great risk.

During those days, though Anthony came two or three times to the Castle, he was not once allowed to see Mabel alone; and while his heart was full of uneasiness about her, there was nothing to rouse his suspicions very strongly, or to give him an excuse for speaking to Randal. Miss Northcote had hinted to him no more than he felt pretty sure of long ago. Besides, poor Anthony had played his best card and lost it; it was plain that he, at least, had no rights over Mabel's future, though no one knew this but themselves.

Randal had every reason to be confident. A box of letters and presents, the sad memorials of those two years, had reached him from Mrs. Lancaster. Considering his own nature, it was strange that he had such faith in Flora's honour and reticence; but he felt quite securely certain that—for her own sake, as he chose to put it—she would keep the secret still; nobody would ever know what they had been to each other. He burnt the letters late one night in his father's study-fire; and as he watched the thin black curls that were now nothing, but had once been so much, he felt himself really a free man, and thought he might as well ask Mabel—to-morrow.

'She is not a bad-looking girl, you know; but I wish she was fair,' Randal confided to the dying fire.

And then came a terrible flood of recollections. Could it be only two years since he first made love to Flora in the Combe? and was any one ever so pretty as Flora? All that would not bear thinking of at night alone, with nothing to divert his mind; for it was true that even now, for some mysterious reason, after he had left her so cruelly, doing all he could to break her heart, Flora Lancaster was still to this wretched Randal the one woman in the world. But he did not give way long to these morbid thoughts. He left the study and went up-stairs, a free man, quite ready to forget all this past foolishness, and determined that before the next night came the little heiress should be engaged to him.

Randal's continued presence at Pensand had rather a strange effect on his father. He seemed to have grown much older since Mabel first came; he was more silent, less arbitrary; he spent his time more than ever alone, and

appeared willing that Randal should take the rule of everything. His manner to his young ward was unfailingly kind and pleasant, though he saw less and less of her, leaving her, like everything else, in his son's care.

But the morning after Randal had burnt his letters, General Hawke told them at breakfast that he was going to drive to Morebay, and asked whether they liked to go with him.

'I have business at the bank,' he said. 'You might show Mabel the harbour and the dockyards. You want some variety in your expeditions.'

'Would you like it, Mabel?' said Randal.

'Of course she would like it,' said the General. 'Pensand for ever is too much for young people. And she won't refuse me the pleasure of her company, for I am an old man, and failing fast. I may never leave Pensand again.'

Mabel looked up rather anxiously; but the General smiled at her.

'I should like it of all things,' she said.

It certainly had been a trial to a young creature, whose curiosity went on growing, to live for so many weeks within a few miles of a place like Morebay, and to have seen nothing of it except the great bustling station, so near the end of her long hot journey from town. This was a fresh beautiful day, with a bright sun, and that light wind blowing which made the St. Denys country look its prettiest, ruffling the surface of its broad gleaming waters. Mabel thoroughly enjoyed the drive, especially the delightful excitement of going on board the chain-ferry, and being drawn across the Mora, horses and all, in company with several carts. Then, as they drove on to-

wards Morebay, there was an occasional view of something blue and great, sparkling and rocking itself against the horizon. And so they came into the white town, with its broad streets and stately buildings, lying in a bold curve of the coast, between the hills and the sea, its harbour, and the mouth of its river, defended by forts and batteries; ships of every size and nation lying together inside those strong defences; great dockyards hard at work; boats darting by here and there in the sunshine with diamond flashes of spray; green and purple shadows crossing the blue of the sea; the deep green of trees on the slopes running down to the water. There was something so glorious in all the noise and brightness and colour of it, that Mabel could hardly speak for pleasure. It seemed so wonderful to have looked down on all this from that silent height of Pensand, to have seen the lights coming out in the evening, day after day, and the distant masts, and the still more distant gleam of sea, and now to find herself really in the midst of it all.

'How beautiful, how very beautiful it is!' she said to Randal, half under her breath.

'Yes, it is a fine town,' he said; 'and one of the best situations in England.'

Randal was not quite in his usual spirits. Driving down that morning through St. Denys to the ferry they had passed Captain Cardew's house, and in spite of himself he had been obliged to look that way. And as the carriage went slowly down the hill, Randal, sitting with his back to the horses, had seen the old Captain himself hurry out to the garden-gate, and stand there staring after it in a fixed manner which struck him as rather

strange. He felt a little uncomfortable, and as if something troublesome was going to happen; and it occurred to him that the expedition of that day to Morebay might be a fortunate thing for him. If that appearance of Captain Cardew's meant anything serious, what was to prevent him from walking in at Pensand Castle, and creating a disturbance there that might be very difficult to calm down again? If his father knew! And if Mabel knew! However, at present they did not know, and it was the part of a wise man to make the best of to-day. He had Mabel all to himself to-day, though it might be for the last time, and before the day was out he meant to be on such terms with her that she might stand by him and believe in him against all the world.

General Hawke went to Morebay very seldom, and thus had many people to see, and much business to do. He had brought Stevens with him, intending Randal and Mabel to be free to amuse themselves, which they found no difficulty in doing; and Randal was soon himself again in the interest of showing things to any one so fresh and so enthusiastic as Mabel. He showed her the dockyard, took her out in a boat in the harbour, and finally on board an ironclad, of which he knew some of the officers. The captain received them with a true sailor's hospitality, and insisted on giving them luncheon. Every one on board watched Mabel with interest, as she walked on the beautiful decks, and listened smiling to her questions. She was like a little princess among the fine rough sunburnt fellows, beside whom Randal looked smaller and paler than ever, though he could not be insignificant. His manner to her was

quite devoted, and Mabel certainly enjoyed being made so much of, and referred to him most naturally in everything. His friends on board saw the state of the case very plainly, and took the good-humoured interest that friends generally do; they thought it was a good thing for young Hawke. Every one knew he had been going on at a great pace in London, and most likely the old General had saved nothing. To catch a nice girl with fine eyes and seventy thousand pounds was the best thing that could happen to him; his friends were quite agreed in that, though perhaps they thought it a little hard that no one should have been allowed a chance of disputing the prize with him. But that was only to be expected from a close old beggar like the General.

Captain Stewart, of H.M.S. *Fortune*, was a kind-hearted man, and felt sorry for the young heiress. He thought of his own daughter, very little younger than Mabel, who was hardly ever let out of her mother's sight, and looked, at least, much better able to take care of herself. He thought it a great pity that General Hawke had not provided some chaperon for his orphan ward, instead of letting her run about alone with his good-for-nothing son, even though she might be engaged to him; and somehow the captain did not feel sure that this was the case. It was no business of his, however, and all he could do was to take good care of the girl while she was on board his ship. He showed her everything in the kindest way, explained the machinery, and how the guns were run out and fired, told her the names of nearly all the ships in the harbour, and what their different flags meant. They were still deep in signals when Randal

joined them; he had been talking to some of the other officers, more of his own age and calibre than Captain Stewart. Mabel was thoroughly sorry to leave the hospitable ship; but Randal had no intention of spending the afternoon there.

There was a fine park at Morebay, on the cliffs to the east of the harbour, where a band used to play on summer afternoons, and people walked about, played games, sat under the trees, and enjoyed the wonderful united beauty of sea and land. The short close grass of the park ran down to the edge of the great shelving red cliffs that dipped their rocky feet in the sea. On that side all the horizon was brilliant sea; on the other, checkered sunshine and shade, green turf and trees, the white terraces of Morebay rising like a great amphitheatre to the far background of blue hills.

After they had landed from the *Fortune*, Randal took Mabel into the park, thinking that she might rest there very pleasantly for an hour. He found a place a little apart from the people, a bench under a group of tall firs that overlooked the sea, and here they sat down. Randal was rather thoughtful, and perhaps more silent than usual, though there was plenty to say about all they had seen. It was Mabel's opinion that she had never in her life spent a more delightful day.

'You are very good to say that,' said Randal. 'Yes, these things are interesting to any one who has not seen them before. I hope I have not tired you.'

'O no! how could I be tired? I have been amused all the time.'

'The most tiring process in the world, it is generally thought,' said Randal.

'I have not had enough of it

to tire me. I really can't imagine what it would be, to be bored by seeing things. One hears that people are, but indeed I can't understand it,' said Mabel, smiling.

'There is something sad, as well as pleasant, in hearing you say that.'

'Why sad?'

'Because it sounds as if your life had been such a very dull one.'

'O, I don't know. Perhaps it is a good thing not to see things too soon. One enjoys them all the more, I think. I am quite contented. One can't expect to understand everything.'

This last little bit of moralising was addressed to herself, in answer to the little doubtful misgiving that told her she was *not* quite contented.

'What do you want to understand?' said Randal.

'You!' Mabel felt half-inclined to say; but she did not. She only shook her head, smiling, and looked away over the sea.

Randal sat and gazed at the slight figure, the dark delicate profile, the long black eyelashes, all so clearly defined against the background of sea and sky. It did not seem a very hard fate to ask this girl to marry him. And yet it was one of the hardest things he had ever had to do in his life.

'Mabel,' he said, 'did you hear what my father said this morning, about being an old man, and failing fast?'

'Yes,' she said, looking round instantly. 'But he didn't mean it, did he?'

'O yes, he meant it. And you must see yourself that it is a fact. Seventy-nine is old, and he had a very hard life of it in India, when he was a young man. And it is quite evident to me—I should have thought it must be so to every one—how fast he has been

going down-hill lately. Even since you came he talks less, walks less, sleeps more, in fact gets older every day. He is perfectly aware of it all himself, and he thinks it is as well that we should know it too.'

There was real sorrow in Mabel's face. 'I have been very horrid and selfish,' she said. 'I have thought of no one but myself all this time.'

'Nonsense, dear Mabel. Your manner to him has always been charming,' said Randal gently. 'His own daughter, if he had one, could not have been more thoughtful or more attentive to all his little whims. It is I who ought to reproach myself. Haven't you often stood up for him, when I have accused him of not being kind enough to you? Don't look so sorrowful, Mabel. It is a compliment to my father, but he wouldn't like it, all the same.'

'But do you really think he is ill?' said Mabel.

'Not ill. Only old. It is the weakness that belongs to old age, and then if any illness does come, there is nothing to stand against it. And he seems to have grown old and weak so quickly somehow. Understand, I don't want you to frighten yourself. I only want to warn you, and myself too, that we must not expect him to live for ever, and then—'

A silence, through which they heard the soft splash of waves on the rocks far below.

'And then, Mabel,' Randal went on, for she did not speak or look at him, 'will you be glad to leave the old house where we have spent such happy days this summer? Must we go off on our different ways, and cease to be anything to each other? Or when my father goes, shall he leave two children to miss him instead of one? What do you say, Mabel darling?'

Mabel sat quite still, in a wild maze of strangely conflicting feelings. She did like Randal very much indeed, and Pensand was the only home she had ever known; she could not say that she cared for any other man, or any other place. Handsome, graceful, agreeable, kind and thoughtful from the first day of their acquaintance, and now, apparently, in love with her, there seemed to be everything in his favour, and nothing against him. Still, as she sat there blushing, and hardly able to see anything clearly in that mist of confusion, she was aware of the little doubt that Randal often brought into her mind. She did not quite understand him; she was never sure that he was in earnest, and had often wondered what it was that brought a shadow into his face sometimes, when he did not know she was looking at him. Of course he interested her; and yet she had often wished that his eyes were not so dark and deep, but more like Dick Northcote's, blue and frank, and open as the day.

'What are you thinking of, Mabel, all this time? Is there so much doubt about it?' said Randal, beginning to feel a little anxious. 'Is it quite a new idea to you? I assure you that since the first day we met I have thought of nothing else.'

Mabel had a way of honestly forgetting her own advantages, and it did not occur to her that this devotion was not quite all for herself.

'O, I am so surprised,' she said, in a very low voice. 'I can't understand it.'

'What can't you understand, dearest?' said Randal tenderly. 'But I don't care about that. I only want you to believe what I say, that my whole life depends on the answer you give me now.'

Turn your face this way, Mabel. Look at me and trust me, dear.'

Mabel did turn towards him, but their eyes did not meet. They were caught by the most unwelcome appearance of a rough-looking elderly man, whose red face and reddish-gray whiskers seemed all bristling with anger, as he came round the trees suddenly, and stood in front of them. He had a light stick in his hand, and with this he struck Randal sharply on the shoulder.

'Stand up, sir, and answer me!' he cried. 'You are a jilt and a coward!'

CHAPTER XXIII.

AN OLD LETTER.

Mrs. CARDEW had been anxious about her daughter for some time; in fact, ever since her tiring walk to Pensand Castle. Flora seemed to have lost all her good-tempered serenity; she was nervous, restless, and irritable; she walked about her room at night, instead of sleeping like other people. Mrs. Cardew lay awake and listened on the other side of the wall, for her faithful affection could not rest while Flora was disturbed. She hardly dared ask what was the matter, for this seemed to annoy Flora more than anything, and the consequence generally was that she rushed out of the house and did not come back for hours, then quite exhausted and with a racking headache.

One evening, after a walk, things were worse than ever. Flora sobbed half the night, and came down the next morning with her eyes red and heavy. She was so evidently wretched that the Captain noticed it, and began asking questions in his turn.

'O, it is nothing,' said Flora impatiently. 'I have a cold, and

it kept me awake all night. That's all.'

'Then take care of yourself to-day, and don't go out,' said her father.

But instead of following this advice, Flora made that expedition to the other side of the Penyr, which ended in Dick Northcote's bringing her back to St. Denys in General Hawke's boat.

After that evening Flora's mood changed entirely, but not in a way to relieve her mother's anxiety. She seemed to be in a state of dull stony indifference. She would sit staring out of the window till her eyes became gradually wet with tears. Then, when she could not see, she would hastily wipe them away and take up some old piece of work, and stitch mechanically for a few minutes; then drop it and stare out of the window again. In the morning and evening, when her father was at home, she made little efforts to talk and be like herself, which distressed and puzzled poor Mrs. Cardew more than anything. She did not say anything to the Captain about her anxiety, fearing that he would make a fuss and annoy Flora; but she was thoroughly miserable herself, mourning over her dear beautiful girl, who had always been so good.

Flora had something terrible on her mind; that was quite clear; and the worst of it was that she would not tell her mother.

Flora had not been out for several days, and had spent her time lying on the sofa, or occupied in the melancholy way I have described, when one afternoon Mrs. Cardew came suddenly into the room and found her with her hat on, standing by the table. In front of her was a small open box, which appeared to be full of letters, tied up with ribbon in separate packets. Mrs. Cardew

just saw this before Flora shut down the lid. Then she locked it, and began packing it up in sheets of brown paper, and tying string round it with trembling fingers. Mrs. Cardew came to help her.

'No, mother, never mind,' said Flora. 'I can do it myself.'

'But your hands are so shaky, dear. Old letters! What are you doing with them?' said Mrs. Cardew, quite unable to restrain her curiosity.

'Old letters, yes,' said Flora. 'I am going to get rid of them. The best way, isn't it?'

'I should have thought the fire was the best way,' said her mother. 'Where are they going? To the North?'

'North, south, east, west—I don't know, I'm sure,' said Flora. 'For a sailor's daughter I'm weak about the points of the compass.'

'To the Lancasters, I meant,' Mrs. Cardew ventured to suggest. 'Have you heard from any of them? They *can't* want a lot of old letters. Much better put them in the fire.'

'Do you think so?' said Flora.

She had tied her string securely; she took up the box and turned towards the door.

'My dear, you are not going out?' said Mrs. Cardew anxiously.

Flora looked round and gave her a strange little nod. Then, seeing the consternation in her mother's face, she suddenly smiled, came back to her, and kissed her.

'Never mind, mother,' she said, with something like her old considerate gentleness. 'I shall soon be back. Don't trouble your mind about me, dear.'

'Ah, you make me very unhappy, Flora,' said Mrs. Cardew. 'You have no confidence in those who deserve it most—your father and me. Do you suppose you can be miserable, and we not see it?'

'Well, then,' said Flora, 'if you do see it, mother, help me to get over it by letting me alone and saying nothing. And for goodness' sake keep my father quiet, for he would drive me mad.'

'I know that, dear,' said Mrs. Cardew, sighing. 'But if you want that box to go to the station, Sarah can run down with it this minute. Don't go out yourself, Flora, to please me.'

'I must please myself for this once, mother dear,' said Flora.

She kissed her again, and went, carrying the box in her hand. Mrs. Cardew hoped it was not heavy. She looked out of the front window, and saw Flora go through the garden-gate, and turn up the hill to the right, instead of down to the left towards the station. Here was another mystery; but poor Mrs. Cardew was getting used to them.

Flora was out an hour or more. She came in without the box, and, though very tired, seemed more cheerful all the evening. But the next day she looked more miserable than ever. She did not come down to breakfast, and Mrs. Cardew was obliged to confess, in answer to the Captain's inquiries, that she thought her very ill.

'Well,' said Mrs. Cardew, with tears in her eyes, 'it's no wonder if she is ill. Sleepless nights by the dozen, and something that keeps her low and wretched all day long. Nobody could stand that for ever, and poor Flora's breaking down.'

'But what is it?' shouted the Captain, bringing down his fist on the table.

'Don't ask me, for I don't know. And don't make all that noise. I can't do anything for my poor child but nurse her to the best of my power, and it will be strange if some day she doesn't

tell her old mother everything, just for the sake of peace.'

Captain Cardew went off to Morebay as usual, and the little house was very quiet all that day. Flora came down-stairs; but she seemed weary and stupefied; she would neither speak nor eat, and lay half dozing on the drawing-room sofa.

Mrs. Cardew had lighted the fire there, as it was a cold showery day, and all through the long afternoon she stole in at intervals to look at Flora. There she lay just the same, scarcely moving or opening her eyes as her mother bent over her, looking thin and fair and delicate, and above all things tired, with lines and hues of weariness about her brow and eyes that looked as if they could hardly be done away in this world.

But the last time, to Mrs. Cardew's great relief, she was sleeping soundly; it was a pleasure to hear her regular breathing, and a softened look, almost a smile, had stolen over the poor face. The thick blinds were down, and the room was in twilight, lit up by the varying flicker of the fire. Flora lay with her head turned away from the light; a shawl was thrown over her, and the fringe of it trailed on the carpet; one of her hands was half hanging down too, with the palm upwards, and the fingers slightly curved. On the floor, partly under the fringe, lay an open letter, which might have dropped from her hand. This caught Mrs. Cardew's eye just as she turned away, with an easier heart, from watching Flora's sleeping face. She stooped instinctively and picked up the letter.

Mrs. Lancaster had led a very independent life since she came back to her parents; her friends and her correspondence were all

her own, and the old people were quite aware that she would not like any curious questioning about them. Their admiration and respect for Flora, and their faith in the strength of her character, had kept them quite contented under these circumstances. Flora took possession of her own letters every day, and showed them to nobody. She also had a habit of posting her own. Captain and Mrs. Cardew did not get many letters, or take much interest in the post at all, and Flora was as free in these ways as if she had lived alone. Her father's outburst about Dick Northcote had been quite a solitary event.

Mrs. Cardew was aware, however, when she picked up that letter, that Flora had had many in the same handwriting, small and neat and manly. The edges of this were a little worn, as if with constant reading. Mrs. Cardew, holding it open in her hand, could not help seeing the beginning. The fire just then leaped up too, and lighted the words strangely and suddenly. The letter was dated from London, more than two years before, and began, 'My own dearest Flora.'

Mrs. Cardew turned white, and laid her hand on her heart, as if to keep it quiet, for she felt a conviction, really like lightning in its sudden awfulness, that now she was going to know all. The worn letter, Flora's companion—so old, but still kept with her in her trouble—this must have something to do with the trouble itself. If Mrs. Cardew stopped to think at all, she thought that Flora's mother had a right to know what had brought her child into this state, and she read on without any doubt or hesitation.

'My own dearest Flora,—When we parted last night at your gate

after those hours of intense happiness in the Combe, I felt, as I feel now, that I should not know how to live till I saw you again. But this misery is nothing to what I suffered for so long before, till I was able to tell you what you were to me, and to have the joy of hearing that my love was returned. I scarcely feel myself worthy of such a treasure, or of your noble confidence, in consenting to keep our engagement secret for the present. I trust the need for secrecy will only last a very short time, perhaps a few weeks, till I feel myself in a position to speak to my father. You know how careful one must be with old people and their prejudices, though I have no fear of the future, for my father need only be acquainted with you to have all his prejudices done away with. Write to me constantly, my own. Among these crowds I can see no face but yours. I am very lonely, and the days will seem like years till I am with you again. I need not tell you to have perfect trust in me, my sweetest Flora. Everything shall soon be as clear as daylight, and as you tell me it is in my power to make you happy, your life shall be happier than the wildest dream. Forget everything that is sorrowful, and above all things have faith and confidence in your devoted lover,

‘RANDAL HAWKE.’

Mrs. Cardew read this letter twice through before she understood it in the least, and stared at the signature for full two minutes afterwards. Then with a deep sigh she murmured, ‘O Lord, have mercy upon us!’ and sat down in a low chair by the fire, being quite unable to stand. She sat there for some time, and read the letter once again. The clock

ticked on the mantelpiece; Flora slept on, breathing softly and evenly; light showers pattered against the south windows. At last the Captain’s firm active step came up the garden-walk, he opened and shut the house-door, and after taking off his hat and wet coat put his head into the drawing-room.

‘Is she asleep?’ asked the Captain, in a loud whisper. ‘Hallo, are you ill too? You’re as white as a ghost.’

‘O John!’ said Mrs. Cardew tremulously, ‘I’ve found out something—something so dreadful! Come here.’

‘What’s the matter now?’ said the Captain. ‘You women are always in some fuss or other;’ but he walked up to the fire, and Mrs. Cardew put the letter into his hand.

‘Read that,’ she said. ‘It is right you should know. O my poor child! What am I to do?’

She took hold of one of the Captain’s rough hands, and bowed her forehead on it as he stood beside her.

‘What! is it about Flora?’ said the Captain. ‘Who is it from? Randal Hawke! What on earth—’

‘Hush, hush! read it,’ said Mrs. Cardew.

The Captain’s eyes were slower than hers, and he was a long time getting through the letter. At first he made an amazed exclamation or two, then finished it in silence.

‘What nasty confounded underhand business is this?’ he asked sternly, throwing back the letter into his wife’s lap. ‘Flora engaged to that young Hawke, and telling us nothing about it all this time! I don’t like it, however rich he may be. Such a sneaking affair can’t turn out well. But you need not break

your heart over it, old woman. Flora's beyond my understanding. She treated Dick Northcote shamefully.'

'O, I have no thoughts to spare for any Dicks,' said Mrs. Cardew impatiently. 'You don't see, Captain; you don't understand.'

'I'll be hanged if I do!' said the Captain, staring at her.

'Look at Flora's state. Think of the gossip we have heard about young Hawke and that Miss Ashley, the heiress, the General's ward. Now do you see? He has jilted Flora—half killed her, I think. Everything is clear now. O, I understand it all.'

The Captain looked at her hard for a moment. Then he looked at Flora as she lay on the sofa, sleeping the deep sleep of exhaustion. Then he set his teeth, stamped his foot on the floor, and brought out one or two tremendous words.

'O, don't! Be still, Captain; you'll wake her!' exclaimed Mrs. Cardew; but the mischief was done already.

Flora sat up on the sofa, pushing back her hair with both her thin hands, and stared wildly at her father and mother, as they stood there, the letter lying on the hearthrug between them.

'My darling, my own sweet child!' said Mrs. Cardew, going to her.

'What is that letter, mother?' said Flora, pointing to it.

Mrs. Cardew gave a sort of gasp. Captain Cardew picked up the letter, and held it out by one corner; they both stood still and looked at Flora.

'You have read that letter?' she said. 'How could you! It was mine.'

Neither of them answered her at once, but after a minute the Captain said, in his gruff voice,

which trembled a little, 'Shall I put it in the fire? The best place for it.'

'No; give it me,' said Flora.

She lay back on the cushion, with her two hands folded over it. Her eyes were unnaturally large in the twilight; and her father and mother stood watching her in a fascinated way, for tragedy was not a well-known element in their family history.

'You know all about it, you two, if you have read this,' she said calmly, in a low voice. 'So I am punished for keeping it. I suppose it was wrong.'

'Punished, dear!' murmured her mother.

'Yes. I was to send back all his letters. You saw them, mother. But I kept this one, because it was the first, and I did not like him to see how much it had been read. Well, it was of a piece with the rest of my folly. Are you angry with me for keeping the secret?'

'Angry, my poor Flora! My heart's breaking for you,' said Mrs. Cardew, kneeling down beside her.

'And you, father?' said Flora.

'I am angry,' said the Captain slowly; 'much more angry than I ever was in my life before. Not with you; with that scoundrel Hawke. But we'll give him a lesson. We'll bring an action for breach of promise.'

The colour came into Flora's pale face, overspreading it slowly.

'No, father,' she said. 'If you do that, I'll make an end of it all by drowning myself in the Mora. So you know what to expect. Don't be vexed with me. I really could not stand that; it would kill me.'

'Look here, Flora,' said the Captain earnestly; 'I won't say another word about that. But is that fellow who has done you all

this harm to go scot-free, and marry any one he likes, without interference from heaven or earth? It's a sinful thing, and I won't consent to it. Now, my dear, if it won't distress you, just tell your mother and me the facts of the case. You have no friends like us, remember.'

The Captain took a chair by the sofa, and sat there like an old doctor listening to a fanciful patient. Mrs. Cardew knelt on the other side, and wiped away her tears now and then, as Flora quite calmly and tearlessly told her story. The Captain ground his teeth now and then, but with wonderful self-control showed no other signs of rage.

'The girl is too good for him,' said Flora, after she had finished, and had paused for a minute or two.

'There is not a girl in England bad enough for him,' said the Captain. 'And he's to be left, is he, to marry this nice girl, with the character he chooses to give himself? You say Dick Northcote knows? Is he going to stand by and suffer that? If he is, I'm not, as sure as my name's Jack Cardew.'

'O Captain, don't be violent,' sighed his wife.

'I'm not violent,' said the Captain very truly. 'Don't you be soft and silly. You see, Flora, I'm the most reasonable man on earth; but what I say now, I mean. If that girl marries Randal Hawke, she shall do it with her eyes open. She and his father shall know this history of his engagement to you, and after that they may settle their affairs their own way. I shall speak to him first, and I shall make him confess it to them in my presence, and then I hope I may never set eyes on any of the lot again.'

Flora lay and looked at him with her sad eyes.

'I cannot have the thing made public, father. You see that. We should have to leave St. Denys.'

'Yes, my dear,' said the Captain, with extraordinary gentleness. 'But you must see yourself the justice of what I say. A man ought not to play such a trick as this without being punished for it. I shall make short work of it. I shall go to Pensand to-morrow.'

'You will? Then do keep your word, and do it quietly, and don't for goodness' sake let any of the servants be in the way,' said Flora. 'I can't bear it. It seems so odious of me.'

'It is not you at all. It is I that choose to do it. And I shall be doing right,' said Captain Cardew. 'Take care of that letter. The fellow doesn't know you have got it, probably, and he may deny the fact altogether.'

Flora did not answer. A minute or two afterwards the Captain left the room, and his wife followed him. Flora got up from her sofa, walked feebly across the room, dropped her long-treasured letter into the fire, and saw it burn to ashes.

This was how Captain Cardew came to appear before Randal and Mabel in the park at Morebay.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CAPTAIN CARDEW'S BARGAIN.

AT that trying moment Randal kept his coolness and self-command.

'Go away; the man is mad,' he whispered to Mabel.

Then he started up, snatched the stick from Captain Cardew's hand, and flung it away over the edge of the cliff.

'What do you mean, Captain

Cardew?' he said. 'You are in a passion.'

The Captain's conscience smote him a little. He had meant to do this disagreeable business very coolly and quietly, but the sight of those two under the fir-trees had been suddenly too much for him.

'No, sir, I am not in a passion,' he said. 'If I was, I might send you after my stick. I wish to know what you mean by your conduct to my daughter.'

'Wait till we are alone, at any rate,' exclaimed Randal. 'You are under a mistake. I will explain; but we can't discuss the subject in this lady's hearing. Walk slowly towards the town,' he said to Mabel, in a peremptory voice that trembled in spite of himself. 'I'll overtake you; don't stay here.'

Mabel gazed at the two men in astonished horror. She had never before heard Randal speak in such a tone, in such a manner. He was in what people call a 'white rage,' and no wonder. Her look was too much for him. He came forward, seized her wrist, and almost dragged her away from Captain Cardew to the other side of the fir-trees.

'Do you hear what I say, Mabel? This man is mad; he wants to ruin me. He tells frantic lies; you must not stay here and listen.'

Mabel looked at him. She was horrified, but not the least frightened.

'He is Mrs. Lancaster's father,' she said.

'What of that?' said Randal. Then his manner suddenly changed. 'My dear Mabel, if you care for me the least, if you believe in me at all, go quietly away, and let me talk to him.'

Mabel felt as if everything was all wrong. It seemed hours ago that she and Randal had been

sitting there, that he had been saying those things so difficult to answer. Now there came the strangest feeling, as if all that had been mere play, and this at last was earnest. She had never seen Randal so disturbed, not even when Mrs. Lancaster came to them that day on the beach, a most disagreeable recollection. But of course she had nothing to say, and could only do as Randal asked her. She bowed her head very gravely, and walked away at once into the open park, where the sun was shining, and people who looked free and happy were passing up and down. Randal went back to the old Captain, who was standing with his arms folded, gazing out to sea. The little interval, the necessity of getting Mabel out of the way, had quieted them both.

'What do you wish to say to me?' said Randal, as the Captain did not at once turn or look at him.

'Is that young lady engaged to you?'

'I fail to see how that concerns you,' said Randal. 'However,' he added, after a moment's thought, 'to show you that I wish to be candid and friendly, I will tell you that she is not. May I beg that you will not mention her again.'

The Captain took no particular notice of this request.

'I hear, Mr. Randal Hawke,' he said, 'that for more than two years past you have been engaged to my daughter. She acted very foolishly in concealing such a thing from her parents, but of course that was your doing; it did not suit you that the fact should be made public. I say no more about that. If the engagement had been generally known, you would hardly have dared, sir, to back out of it in so mean and dishonourable a manner. You

would have been more careful of your character as a gentleman.'

Randal stood biting his lips, and looking at the Captain under his frowning eyebrows.

There was something so manly, straightforward, and fearless about the old sailor, especially now that he spoke with some degree of calmness, that even Randal felt obliged to respect him.

'You speak hardly, Captain Cardew,' he said. 'But I don't mean to lose my temper with you, for two reasons. First, you are Flora's father; and second, I am more sorry about this unfortunate affair than you can be. You don't imagine that I should have broken off with Flora if I had not been forced to it by necessity? I hoped that she herself perfectly understood that.'

'I don't know what she understood,' said Captain Cardew. 'She only knows, as I do, that you have jilted her in a cruel and cowardly manner, to make a marriage more advantageous for yourself. She is ill, and I shouldn't wonder if she was fool enough to pine away and die—I didn't mean to tell you that, though. And you will be good enough in future to call her Mrs. Lancaster, if you speak of her at all. Flora is for her own people.'

'Yes, I beg your pardon,' said Randal, with wonderful meekness. He looked at the Captain, as if waiting for what more he had to say.

'I assure you, sir,' said the old sailor more fiercely, 'that few men would take this affair so quietly as I do. You may think yourself lucky to escape an action for breach of promise.'

Randal stroked his moustache, and was silent.

'What have you to say for yourself?' demanded the Captain.

'I am sorry you and Mrs. Lancaster have taken the thing

up in this way,' said Randal. 'She and I had a long explanation on the subject. I pointed out to her that our engagement would be endless and hopeless. I am not in a position to marry a woman without fortune. Therefore it would have been injustice to her, and misery for both of us, if the thing had dragged on any longer. You yourself could not have wished it for her.'

'I should not have wished it for her at all, under any circumstances,' said the Captain. 'Not if you had been a duke's son, Mr. Randal, and the richest man in the kingdom.'

Randal bowed slightly. He thought this interview tiresome and useless, if nothing worse.

'Then,' he said, 'don't you think we had better say no more about it? Of course I understand your displeasure, and am very sorry to be the cause of it. But Mrs. Lancaster and I talked it over the other day, and quite understood each other. I fancy she would wish the whole thing to be forgotten. These mistakes are constantly made, and people get over them.'

'I hope they do,' said the Captain. 'But some people think that the world was made for their pleasure only, and they have to be shown their mistake. Now, sir, what do you expect me to do?'

Randal stared; he could not quite make out what the old fellow was driving at. But he thought if both sides kept their temper, the affair might blow over without much more mischief.

'Well, Captain Cardew,' he said, with a faint smile, 'you say that under no circumstances you would have liked me for a son-in-law. So I think you might accept my apologies and very sincere regrets,—shake hands, and say no more about it.'

'O, that's what you think?' said the Captain, looking at him hard.

'Yes. And I know Mrs. Lancaster's generous character too well,' said Randal more gravely, 'to believe for a moment that she would wish anything else.'

'So your good fortune is to be built up on her generosity? Very good,' said the Captain. 'Well, you might have a chance with her, I daresay; women are so good-natured. But that's not exactly my view; I can't let you off so easily as that.'

'Explain yourself, please,' said Randal.

He began walking up and down the small space between the trees and the cliff. Captain Cardew stood like a solid old rock, following him with his eyes.

'Your character in this neighbourhood would be a good deal affected, sir, if this story was known,' said the Captain. 'I have it in my hands, you must remember.'

'Very obliging of you to say so,' said Randal, with a perceptible snarl in his voice. He felt that this dreadful father of Flora's would soon make an end of his patience.

'You've told me what you expect me to do,' the Captain went on. 'To shake hands and say no more about it. I think that's hardly reasonable. Now I'll tell you what I expect you to do. Nothing for Flora. You have done your worst by her. If I have my way, she shall never be troubled by thought or word of you again.'

'Well, what?' said Randal, still pacing up and down.

'I don't mean,' said the Captain, 'to mention the affair to anybody.'

'All parties will be obliged to you,' said Randal.

'Stop a moment, sir; I have not done yet. I shall insist on one thing, as a condition of my saying nothing. Your father shall be told, as well as the young lady you mean to marry. You will tell them both in my presence. Then if the young lady chooses to marry you, she will do it with her eyes open.'

Randal stood still and looked at him with an angry scowl.

'You won't insist on that!' he said. 'What good can it do you?'

'None whatever,' said the Captain. 'I shall insist upon it.'

'You might as well tell the whole place at once.'

'As you please, sir.'

'I would rather you did,' said Randal.

He was in such a rage that it was with the greatest difficulty he kept himself quiet, and did not knock the Captain down. But a little prudence still remained, and warned him not to put himself still farther in the wrong. For a minute or two it seemed to him that he was irretrievably ruined. Captain Cardew did not press him, or take him at his word, but let him stand there biting his moustache and staring at the sea. Tell everybody! All the gossips in St. Denys, all his acquaintance in the county, Anthony Strange, Dick Northcote! That last idea was insupportable. Then there was this other plan, to confess to his father and Mabel. Well, he thought he could manage his father, but Mabel was the difficulty. She was hardly sure of him now, and she was a girl of some character and strong prejudices. Still, it ought to touch a girl's heart, he thought, to find out what a scrape he had got into for her sake. He believed he had a great influence over Mabel, and having her to himself at Pensand, surely she might be brought round

in time. If only he could speak to her again first, and bring that scene to a close which Captain Cardew had so inopportunately broken in upon. Yes, on the whole he believed that his enemy's plan was the least fatal of the two. 'Very well,' he said, with a half laugh, which made the old Captain look more grim than ever. 'If you insist upon it, let it be so. You had better come over to Pensand to-morrow, and we will do the thing solemnly.'

'I see nothing to laugh at,' said Captain Cardew. 'But I can't waste my time going to Pensand; my work is here at Morebay. Your father and the young lady are here. Why not do it here, and to-day?'

'Look here,' said Randal. 'I will tell them to-day, if you like; but why should you insist on being present?'

'I mean to be present, sir,' said the Captain. 'And the least you can do is to consent.'

'I must consent, of course,' said Randal. 'But it is understood that after this interesting scene you will let the affair drop completely. I shall never be twitted with it again?'

'That was my intention,' said the Captain. 'I've some notion of the meaning of two old words, honour and conscience. They had dropped out of the dictionary before you went to school, Mr. Randal.'

'If you wish to see my father this afternoon,' said Randal, 'you can meet us at the George at half-past five.'

'I shall be there,' said Captain Cardew.

Randal found Mabel, who, of course, did not know her way about the town, sitting on a bench at the other side of the park, near the band and the people, many of

whom looked at her curiously; it seemed as if such a helpless, peculiar-looking little person was hardly fit to be alone.

'Here I am at last,' said Randal, as she got up to join him. 'Come along; I don't want that old fool to overtake us. Poor old man! You think it wrong of me to call him names, but if he had been prosing away at you for the last half hour, after interrupting us just at that moment! You are tired, dear; take my arm.'

Randal seemed strangely disturbed and excited. Mabel looked at him with her eyes full of wondering reproach. Those few words that the Captain had said to Randal in her hearing had repeated themselves ever since. 'You are a jilt and a coward. I wish to know what you mean by your conduct to my daughter.' They had mixed themselves with the merry tunes that the band was playing; such words were never set to such music before. Could it be that Mabel had been walking all this time blindfold near a precipice, and that those rough words of the old sea-captain had come to warn her just in time? Mabel's meditations went very near the truth as she sat there, scarcely hearing the band or seeing the gaily-dressed crowd of people. When Randal came back to her she had nothing to say to him. She did not take his arm; they walked slowly together along a stone terrace facing the sea, and for some time both were silent.

'Mabel,' said he at last, 'have you been thinking at all of what I asked you?'

'O yes,' said Mabel.

'You dear sweet girl! Forgive me for tormenting you, but I can't think or speak of anything else till I have your answer. You do care for me, Mabel, don't you? I am not mistaken?'

'O, I don't know. Don't ask me now,' said Mabel, in a low voice.

'Then I am very hopeful,' said Randal. 'You would say no at once if you disliked me. If you are not sure *that* way, it is all right.'

Probably Mabel had never heard the old French proverb about 'Château qui parle, et femme qui écoute,' but there was something in Randal's hopefulness which frightened her at once. She looked up at him very gravely.

'You must not be hopeful,' she said; 'I can't let you.'

'How can you help it, my dear child?' said Randal.

'Don't speak to me like that, please,' said Mabel, giving herself an impatient little shake. 'It is very hard for me,' she went on, after a moment's pause, in a tired unhappy voice. 'I have been alone all this time. I have had no friends, nobody to take care of me or advise me, nobody even to speak the truth to me, it seems. I must take care of myself, though I am so young. You won't see that.'

'I do see it, most clearly,' said Randal. 'But the unfortunate circumstances—I have done my best to keep you from feeling friendless, and I want to give you my whole life, if you will only let me. The truth, dear Mabel? I don't quite know what you mean.'

'O yes, you do,' said Mabel, with a trembling voice.

Randal did not speak for a minute. Then he said, 'Well, Mabel, I am not a perfect character, it is true; not nearly good enough for a sweet girl like you. But you will soon know the worst of me.'

Mabel wondered what he could mean, but did not ask him, and he did not explain himself. They strolled slowly on towards the

hotel, where they were to meet the General.

When the chimes from the clock tower said that it was half-past five they were all three sitting in a pleasant up-stairs room looking out into the chief square of Morebay. Tea had been brought, and Mabel had poured it out, and was now leaning back in her chair in a little dream. The General also seemed tired, and was reading the paper. Randal had opened the window and gone out into the balcony. Suddenly, as the chimes ceased, he stepped back into the room.

'Father,' he said, 'Captain Cardew is coming in.'

Mabel was roused, and gazed at him anxiously. The General also looked up in some surprise, for there was a curious tone in Randal's voice, a slight tremor very unusual with him.

'Anything wrong?' said the General. 'Why shouldn't he come in? The George is free to everybody.'

'He is coming here to see you,' said Randal.

He did not look at Mabel, though she was watching him with painful intensity.

'What a bore!' said General Hawke. 'Did you know he was coming?'

'Yes.'

'Then you might have prevented it. Mabel and I are resting ourselves.'

'He won't be here long. He thinks it a matter of necessity,' said Randal.

The door was opened, and Captain Cardew came in. Mabel left her chair at the table, and retreated to the farthest window, where she sat down. There was an awkward moment of silence, after the General had shaken hands with Captain Cardew.

'You have some business with

me?' said the General, in a friendly manner.

'Your son will explain it,' answered the old Captain, waving his hand towards Randal.

'What is all this about, Randal?' said General Hawke, with some impatience. 'Shall we go down into the coffee-room?'

He made a sign with his eyebrows in the direction of Mabel.

'Captain Cardew wishes Miss Ashley to be here,' said Randal.

'Look sharp, then,' said the General.

It is difficult not to pity Randal, for certainly never was a young man in a more awkward position.

'I have something to tell you, sir,' he said to his father. 'You won't interrupt me, I hope, till I have done. Sit down, Captain Cardew.'

'Thank you; I'll stand,' said the Captain.

General Hawke sat in his arm-chair, frowning with amazement. Mabel trembled in the background. Randal stood with his back to the light, and both hands on a chair, quite composed and cool.

'You always knew,' he said, addressing his father, 'that I had a great admiration for Mrs. Lancaster, Captain Cardew's daughter. But you did not know that I had been engaged to her. Our engagement lasted for two years, and was only broken off the other day.'

'Who broke it off, sir? Who backed out of it?' said Captain Cardew.

'It was not in the bond that you should ask me questions,' said Randal. 'However, the fact is, I broke it off. It was a foolish affair from the beginning.'

'Foolish on both sides,' said the Captain. 'But only bad and heartless on one.'

'Look here, Captain Cardew,' said Randal, stepping forward, 'I have done what we agreed on. You will oblige me by making no farther remarks. It would be better if you were to leave us.'

Captain Cardew took no notice of these words, or of the young man's flashing eyes and angry movement. He looked at the General, who was leaning back in his chair, turning his eyes in a vague way from one to the other.

'This is the only compensation I have asked from your son, sir,' he said, 'for his behaviour to my daughter. We on our side shall say no more about it, and the sooner his friends forget it, the better for him.'

'Can't you leave us now, as I asked you?' said Randal. 'You have had your will, and my father is not fit to talk to you.'

Mabel suddenly came forward from her corner, and took one of the General's hands between her own.

'Randal,' he said, in a low thick voice, 'I feel ill. Order the carriage. I must go home at once.'

'Do you hear that?' said Randal, in a furious whisper, to the Captain. 'Come down-stairs with me.'

The two men went out together, and Mabel was left with the General. For a minute he did not speak, but stared vacantly across the room. Then he looked up at her and smiled.

'Randal always talks nonsense, my dear,' he muttered. 'He is a funny fellow, but you may depend upon him, in spite of that.'

A WINE WE ALL DRINK.

To point out a verbal connection between the wine called sherry and a Roman emperor might appear at the first blush a mere attempt to rival that ardent philologist who insisted on tracing the derivation of pickled cucumber from a Jewish prophet through the following filiation: King Jeremiah—Jeremiah King—Jerry King—gherkin—pickled cucumber. Yet if we are strictly to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, amongst them must be counted the name of the wine in question. Every schoolboy of the Macaulayan standard knows that sherry takes its name from the chief seat of its production, the town of Jerez de la Frontera in Andalusia. But the Roman name of the said town happened to be *Cæsaris Asidona*. This the Arabs converted into *Cæris Sidonia*, and the Spaniards in turn into Jerez, whence we English have derived the word *sherris* or sherry.

Here is a hint for the antiquarian diner-out. He can open up a magnificent field of historical speculation with the first glass of Amontillado, immediately after the soup.

He might intimate that the wines of Bætica were deemed worthy of honourable mention by more than one Latin writer, and that traces yet existing prove that some of the Jerez vineyards date from the days when Spain ranked as a Roman province. *Præfecti* and *proconsules* consoled themselves with their produce for their enforced exile from the Seven Hilled City and the absence of their beloved Falernian, which itself, according to the erudite Dr. Henderson, presented all the characteristics of a well-matured brown sherry of the old Jerezano type, deepening in colour with age, and becoming aromatic and rich in pungent bitterness. Cæsar himself, who did some hot fighting in this region,

may have quaffed the local vintage with approbation. To Vandal chieftains and Gothic kings it proved equally grateful; but when the power of Don Roderick was shattered on the banks of the Guadalete, and the turbaned hordes of Tarik and Muza spread throughout the length and breadth of the Iberian peninsula, the slaughter of the unbeliever and the uprooting of his vineyard appeared acts of equal merit in the eyes of these stern followers of the Prophet. Their more degenerate descendants were, however, less abstemious; for when, by the help of good San Dionisio, King Alfonso the Wise finally planted the standard of the cross on the walls of Cæris Sidonia, he was able to reward each of the forty hidalgos who settled in the conquered territory in 1268, under Nuño de Lara, with six aranzadas—or as much land as a pair of oxen could plough in a week—of already flourishing vineland. And to these the monarch, who had not disdained to handle the pruning-knife with Diego Perez de Vargas, was careful to add another six aranzadas expressly for planting with vines. From that time forward, despite the desolation wrought by Moorish incursions and the fearful pestilences of the middle ages, the vineyards of Jerez continued to extend their boundaries year after year. There is ample testimony amongst the records of the 'most noble and most loyal city' as to the importance of the traffic in their produce, and the acceptability of the said produce to the knights and nobles whom Ferdinand and Isabella led to the siege of Granada, and to the hardy adventurers who swarmed in the track of Columbus to dare the unknown perils of the New World.

As to the date when sherry first

reached England, it can only be a matter of conjecture. There are frequent references to the 'white wine of Spain' in the *Liber Albus* and other civic records of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and old Geoffrey Chaucer has celebrated the stealthily intoxicating effects of 'the wine of Lepe,' a port to the westward of Jerez. The troubled reign of the sixth Henry was further disturbed by the complaints of sundry Spanish merchants anent the seizure of their wine-laden argosies, and the year of Richard Crookback's accession is noted by the Jerez historian, Cardenas, as one in which the price of wine fell, in consequence of the non-arrival of the English vessels that were wont to visit the port annually in quest of it. And looking at the connection between England and Spain, brought about by Henry VII. and Ferdinand the Catholic, we may fairly assume that the vintage of Jerez warmed the cold blood of the first Tudor, and inflamed that of his hot-tempered son.

But it is under the maiden queen and her pawkie successor that sherry reaches the acme of historical importance. The gallants who followed Essex and Effingham to the sack of Cadiz, and the stout sea-dogs who helped Hawkins and Frobisher to singe the beards of the Dons on the Western Main, had ample opportunities of becoming acquainted with the genuine juice of the Jerez grape in the cellars of the Gaditanians and the holds of captured galleons; and when more peaceful days arrived, gladly fought their battles o'er again, over a brimming measure of the same amber-hued fluid. Sherry found favour with all the great Elizabethan soldiers, sailors, scholars, and statesmen. It fired the hearts of the men who fought the Armada and defied the

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Pope, the devil, and the Spaniard, who lived like Francis Drake and died like Richard Grenville. It stirred the ponderous brain of Burleigh and quickened the keen intellect of Walsingham, oiled the bitter tongue of Coke, and helped to point the agile toe of Hatton. It spurred the mighty mind of Bacon and the sprightly fancy of high-souled Sidney. It cheered Spenser in his Irish solitude and Raleigh in his gloomy prison. In sherry courtly Leicester pledged his royal mistress amidst the revels of Kenilworth, and hare-brained Essex drained a goblet of the same liquid topaz to her health before laying his head upon the scaffold. And what does not literature owe to a beverage which a contemporary poet describes as enabling writers 'to versify most ingeniously without much cudgeling of brains'? What quaint conceits and nimble fancies do we not owe to the Jerez grape on the part of those who 'outwatched the Bear' under the presidency of Rare Ben in the Apollo Room of the Devil Tavern, or joined in mad revelry at the Mermaid till the very atmosphere grew electric with the wit of poets, dramatists, and sages? Surely Falstaff's eulogium of the wine—which he maintained dried up all the foolish, dull, and crudy vapours environing the brain, illumined the face and impelled the heart to deeds of courage—could only have been penned by the Bard of Avon from an honest conviction of its excellent merits, acquired when 'the sup of sherry sack hung at his muchato.'

Glorious as was this apogee of sherry, it was destined to suffer an eclipse. In the days of Charles and Cromwell, Canary ruled the roast, the beaux and sparks of the Restoration brought French wines into fashion, and then came the

Methuen Treaty and the War of Succession. Mountain Malaga and Lisbon were the white wines in vogue during the eighteenth century, and Madeira and Vidonia at the commencement of the nineteenth; for though sherry began to be imported in largely increased quantities from 1790, it remained to a certain extent under a cloud till about 1820, when the First Gentleman in Europe 'damned Madeira as gouty,' and gave the wine of Jerez a position it has ever since so worthily maintained.

The Jerez vineyards proper are upwards of 15,000 acres in extent, and are distributed over a tract of undulating country some $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles long by 10 broad, with the town standing in the midst. Those scattered over the plain in the immediate vicinity of the sherry capital, and particularly to the north and north-east, and the soil of which is known as *barro-arenoso*, a sandy clay combined with oxide of iron, produce wines of very ordinary qualities; while the more distant vineyards covering the chalky slopes and ridges of the outlying amphitheatre of hills, the compact soil of which is termed *albariza*, yield wines of the highest character, developing in course of time a remarkable variety of flavour. Wines of an intermediate, yet coarse, quality are yielded by the vineyards of the lower slopes and valleys, the dark alluvial soil of which is styled *bugeo*. Altogether there are upwards of 140 *pagos de viñas* or *crus*, and conspicuous amongst the vinelands lying northward are the famous districts of Macharnudo and Carrascal, the latter deriving its name from the evergreen oaks which are to-day notable by their absence.

Westward of Jerez, and in the direction of San Lucar, is the celebrated Balbaina district, already

famous in the fifteenth century, thanks to the skill of the monks of Santo Domingo, to whom its vineyards chiefly belonged, and who encountered friendly rivals in the Carthusians, builders of the still stately, though shattered, pile known as La Cartuja, situate, with its vast bodega, in the neighbourhood of Jerez, on the banks of the Guadalete, and in full view of the plain where one of the decisive battles of the world was fought, which resulted in the defeat of Roderick, the last of the Gothic kings. The vineyards formerly belonging to the monastery lie some distance off in a northerly direction, and retain to-day, in connection with their old name of Las Viñas de la Cartuja, some of their ancient reputation. To the east of the sherry capital lie the pagos of Canaleja, Badalejo, and Caulina, reputed the oldest of the Jerez vineyards. It was amongst these that Jussuf of Granada pitched his camp, when in the reign of Sancho el Bravo (1285) he assailed Jerez at the head of 20,000 men.

At vintage time the lonely sandy roads, bordered by hedges of prickly pear, and flanked by olive-groves and by shady avenues leading to snow-white villas embowered in flowering shrubs and trees, are more or less alive with huge wheeled bullock-carts laden with butts of newly-pressed mosto, and mules bearing paniers of dust-covered grapes. In the open fields are herds of goats and oxen feeding off the scanty stubble, while herds of swine batten on the refuse of the wine-press. The summits of the hills are mostly crowned with snow-white *casas de viñas*, while the vineyards themselves are thronged with vintagers, sturdy, ragged, picturesque-looking fellows in broad sombreros and trousers of eccentric pattern, and in-

variably with bright crimson or scarlet sashes round their waists. Only in the outlying districts which help to swell the great sherry supply are the vintagers of the softer sex. The bunches of grapes which they deftly lop off with their ever-ready navajas recall by their size those brought by Joshua's spies from the Promised Land. The grapes are flung into small square wooden boxes known as *tinetas*, which when filled are carried by the men on their heads to the *almijar*, an open court adjacent to the *casa de la viña*. Here they are spread out to dry in the sun on circular mats of esparto for from one to three days, after all the blighted berries have been carefully removed.

The pressing of the grapes usually takes place at night, on account of the cooler temperature giving less chance of precipitate fermentation. The press-house is ordinarily a low tiled building with a brick floor, having ranged along it a row of large wooden troughs about ten feet square and two deep, raised a yard or so from the ground, each having an upright screw of wood or iron fitted in the centre, and a broad wooden spout in front. These receptacles, known as *lagares*, having been partially filled with grapes, which in turn have been lightly sprinkled over with gypsum, a couple of bare-legged fellows in short drawers, striped shirts, and heavily hob-nailed shoes, jump into each of them, and after carefully spreading the bunches with wooden shovels, are soon merrily footing it ankle deep in crushed fruit, whilst the expressed juice pours forth from the spout through a strainer into a large tub placed to receive it. The grapes, after being thoroughly trodden, are shovelled into a heap at one corner of the *lagar* and replaced by fresh ones,

which undergo the same process, till a sufficient quantity of 'murk' has been accumulated for the screw to be brought into play. The trodden grapes, having been built up into a kind of column round the screw by the aid of hands and shovels, are carefully swathed round and round from base to summit with a band of esparto, about four inches in width. Two thick wooden slabs are then bolted together over the top of the pile, with the nut of the screw immediately above them. The handles of the beam being rapidly turned, the slab descends, and the juice gushes forth in abundance from between the interstices of the esparto. Gradually the work becomes harder and harder, till the men, by straining every muscle, are only able to move the handles—to which they have attached their wrists to save themselves from falling, in case they should slip—by a series of jerks a few inches forward at a time. As the tub beneath the spout of the lagar fills, its contents are transferred by the aid of a bucket and funnel to a butt placed alongside. These butts when filled are hoisted upon bullock-carts, and after zigzag metal tubes have been inserted in their bung-holes to admit of the escape of the carbonic acid generated in the fermenting *mosto*, they are sent jolting along over the loose sandy roads to the Jerez bodegas.

At Jerez the be all and end all of human existence is wine, and the inhabitants seem to be generally of the opinion, not that sherry is made to be consumed by mankind, but that mankind was created to consume sherry. The town, however, is not without its attractions. The tourist will be struck by the general air of prosperity which it presents; by its broad streets bordered with acacias and orange-trees; its numerous

little plazas gay with floral parterres, or shaded with umbrageous foliage; its picturesque market-places; its pleasant Alameda, the dazzling whiteness of its houses, the emerald brightness of their *rejas* and balconies, and the cool inner courts of the more pretentious among them, set off with tropical plants and plashing fountains.

The antiquary will delight in the remains of the crenelated ramparts, whence Ebn Tlamet and his walis bid defiance to Ferdinand the Saint; the old Moorish alcazar, half palace and half fortress; the quaintly-sculptured facade of the ancient Casas Consistoriales, the Gothic richness of San Miguel, the vast nave of San Mateo, and the crumbling tower of San Dionisio, where yet hangs the bell that was wont of old to peal forth its alarm-note when the Moors were afield. The student of human nature will be interested in the ceaseless succession of types and the gay pictures of Southern life and manners presented beneath the brightest of skies. But one and all will admit that the deepest and most lasting impression of Jerez is that produced upon the palate by its glorious wine, and upon the eye by the series of vast bodegas which gird it round like a rampart, being scattered about the old Moorish quarter, and lying close alike to the ancient walls, the bull-ring, and the railway-station.

On alighting at the latter place, one of the first objects that attracts a stranger's eye is a lofty square tower rising above an extensive range of buildings, the exterior aspect of which denotes the careful order that prevails within. These are the premises of Señor Manuel Misa, Conde de Bayona; and some idea of their extent may be gathered from the fact that the

eleven bodegas, with the offices, cooperage, carpenter's and smith's shops, engine-house, department for seasoning and steaming casks, store-rooms, and other appendages of a first-class shipping establishment, cover an area of more than eight acres. At Jerez colossal establishments are the rule; and Señor Misa's, which is of the first importance, may be fairly taken as a typical one. A ramble through it will give the reader an idea, not merely of the importance and multiplicity of the business carried on by a large sherry shipper, but of the numerous stages through which sherry has to pass, and the careful treatment it receives in the bodega, ere it is fit to please the palate of those gentlemen of England who sip at home at ease.

But first of all let us give a short explanation of the meaning of the word 'bodega.' Before describing, however, what a bodega is, it may be well to point out what it is not. Bodega, to the majority of readers familiar with the numerous establishments under this name which, by the sale of good wine, Messrs. Lavery have rendered so popular in England, may possibly convey the idea of a building of somewhat ornate architecture, within which wine is retailed by the glass over a wooden counter. The Jerez bodega is, however, nothing of the kind. It is a lofty and capacious store, the local substitute for a cellar, built on a level with the ground, and ordinarily entered through a fore-court or garden. It is usually divided into from three to five aisles by rows of pillars, and is well lighted and ventilated, the rays of the fierce southern sun being, however, carefully excluded by shutters or blinds of esparto. Many of the Jerez bodegas are sufficiently long to admit of a hundred butts of wine

lying side by side in a single row, and as the butts are commonly ranged in three and sometimes in four tiers, and as each aisle has casks stacked along either side, some idea may be formed of the number of butts of sherry housed beneath a single roof.

We have witnessed the birth and noted the parentage of sherry. It now becomes necessary to say something respecting its education. The converse of the poets whom it has so often inspired, it may be said to be made, not born. Its qualities have to be slowly brought out under most careful supervision, and the bodega is the seminary in which this takes place. We have seen the most transferred to casks, and removed to Jerez on bullock-carts. As with a boy freshly brought to school, symptoms of discontent, which assume the form of fermentation, manifest themselves. The new-comers are therefore carefully stored apart, in cool isolated bodegas, lest these symptoms should spread to their more matured co-disciples. Here they remain till the ensuing February or March, when they are drawn off their lees into new casks, and indoctrinated with a certain proportion of spirit in the shape of *aguardiente*, or grape brandy, usually from one to four per cent.

The wine now enters into a transition period, during which, despite the care bestowed, it is especially liable to be attacked by the diseases of childhood in the form of a tendency to turn into vinegar—sometimes to be checked by a timely course of tonics in the shape of spirit—or the development of scuddiness. The final result is, that just as we see children of the same family, educated together, turning out one a genius, a second a scapegrace, a third a man of plain common

sense, and a fourth a fool, so do butts of sherry from the same vineyard, and experiencing precisely the same treatment, develop totally different characteristics. From ten to twenty per cent will become irremediably bad. Of the rest some remain to the end of the chapter vinos finos, pale, dry, soft, delicate, and fresh-tasting. Others, passing through the fino stage, attain the dignity of amontillados, deeper in colour, stouter, dryer, more pungent, and possessing a marked etherous flavour. Others, again, develop into olorosos, the classic wine of Jerez, darker, fuller, richer, and mellow, with a nutty flavour and an exquisite bouquet. Wines below the rank of finos are classed in the slang of the bodega as single, double, and triple rayas, a title derived from the chalk marks on their butts—the fewer the lines the higher being the quality. Sometimes the wines are kept intact in their butts, but as a rule they matriculate in their fourth year of residence, and are admitted to the dignity of forming part of a solera—a term the meaning of which we will proceed to explain.

A solera is a system peculiar to the sherry district of building up new wines on the foundation of old ones. As the older wines are drawn off for sale, the deficiency in the butts is made good with wine of the same character, but a year or so younger, whose place is supplied in like manner by a still younger growth, and this process is continued all down the scale. The butts are never more than half emptied, nor is the deposit at their bottoms by any chance removed. The solera madre, or butt containing the oldest wine, is often of great age, and hence the system necessitates the possession of an immense stock and corresponding capital; but at the

same time it enables the shipper to keep up the uniform excellence of his wines, despite a succession of bad vintages.

At Señor Misa's establishment, after passing through the counting-house, and the rooms where brokers are received, and the wines they offer tasted, the shipping sample-room attracts attention. Lining its walls from floor to ceiling are shelves on which are ranged twelve thousand samples of wine, representing the export orders executed during the past five years. On each individual sample a label sets forth the number of the invoice—a reference to which will indicate the exact character of the wine—the quantity shipped, the date, and the name of the consignee. Hence, whenever an order has to be repeated, the sample, like a photographer's negative, enables it to be exactly reproduced. Proceeding onwards, to the lofty tile-roofed bodegas, with their freshly whitewashed walls and bright green doors and shutters, we pass from the glowing sunshine into a cool interior, where the light is mellowed, and the air redolent with aromatic perfume. This is the Bodega Antigua, containing six lofty aisles, along the sides of which are ranged, in triple tiers, 3000 butts of wine in soleras, including finos of from five to forty years of age, amontillados from the pagos of Balbaina—which won commendation from King Alfonso, when he visited these stores—and olorosos from the Carascal and Macharnudo districts; conspicuous amongst them being the Royal solera, only replenished by choice vintages fully ten years old, the Venturita solera, and another 'founded' in 1824 by the grandfather of Señor Misa's present capataz. These vinous treasures pale, however, before those

of the adjacent Bodega Chica. Only 800 butts here find room, but they contain the oldest wines; the 'fundamental' soleras of the house, including the Treinta Gargollo fino purchased thirty-three years ago, and even then of acknowledged antiquity; the oloroso known as the Non plus ultra, dating from the year of Waterloo; the amontillado of 1820; and two magnificent finos baptised, though not with water, Elena and Paquita, after Señor Misa's wife and daughter. Gazing at all these rare wines, we recall how Napoleon, on his departure for Elba, regretting his inability to bid an individual farewell to each of the Old Guard, solemnly embraced General Petit as their representative. Which butt, we ask ourselves, shall serve us for General Petit. Our guide, venecia in hand (the said venecia being a strip of whalebone a yard in length, with a silver receptacle at the end) awaits our choice. *Place aux dames!* We solicit an introduction to the Señorita Paquita. The bung removed, the venecia deftly descends into the butt, to be quickly withdrawn, when its contents are jerked with a dexterous switch—to be admired, but certainly not imitated—into the wine-glass which our guide holds in his other hand. An ambrosial odour assails the nostrils, and a fresh-tasting delicate almond-flavour gratifies the palate. A single substitute for General Petit not sufficing, we next seek introductions to the illustrious Señor Amontillado, and that noble hidalgo Don Oloroso.

Bodega follows bodega, divided into the same lofty aisles by tall columns of masonry, having the same ranges of butts, with their heads chalked over with mystic hieroglyphs denoting their contents—the 'palm-leaf' of the deve-

loping amontillado, the 'cut stick' of the future oloroso, or the perpendicular lines of the confirmed single, double, or triple raya—the same air of neatness and order being everywhere apparent; we pass the same groups of natty-looking arrumbadores in small caps, coloured shirts, light trousers, and gay crimson sashes, drawing off wine in iron-bound wooden pitchers, styled jarras, or laboriously hoisting butts into position on the upper tiers, by means of sloping skids and ropes. If the butts in these bodegas all have a family resemblance, there is, nevertheless, a marked difference in their contents; for, owing to the varying demands of the English, American, Canadian, Australian, and Scandinavian markets, the 22,000 butts of sherry which Señor Misa commonly keeps in stock comprise no less than eighty distinct varieties of wine. Here are also vino dulce used for imparting softness and mellowness, with muscatels and wines from the outlying districts of Chiclana and Seville, and vinos bajos kept merely for seasoning new casks. Glancing at the little Fondo and Lara Bodegas; the Bodega Nueva; the irregularly-built Fontan Bodega, stored with Pedro Jimenez, the Peter-see-me of the old English dramatists; the Bérrio Bodega, with its 3000 butts of vinos de cabeceos and añadas; and the Badel Bodega, where 2500 butts of Jerezano wines are stored, amongst them sundry specimens of East India sherry that would make an alderman's mouth water,—we gain the cool cathedral-like interior of the vast Bodega Grande, 450 feet long, 140 broad, and 50 high. Amongst the 8000 butts lining its six aisles in quadruple tiers are light and delicate soleras of Montilla, the so-styled

'godmother of Amontillado,' from the Cabra district, and the *pagos* of Los Zapateros, and soleras of fragrant manzanilla from the finest vineyards of San Lucar. Under the exterior arcade of the Bodega Grande, which looks on to a spacious paved court, bordered with orange-trees, and encumbered with immense stacks of oak-staves, are numbers of casks undergoing the triple process of seasoning with steam, wine, and water. The clang of hammers and thud of adzes announce the proximity of the cooperage, an important adjunct to a Jerez shipping establishment, where oak from the United States and hoop-iron from England are converted by a hundred workmen into casks of various sizes.

Another busy spot is the Bodega de Extraccion, where wines are placed in casks for shipment, and which forms an index to the rest of the establishment, the four to five thousand butts it contains comprising specimens of every kind of wine in stock, fined and ready for being blended. For though the varieties of natural sherries are infinite, their flavour is far too dry and pungent for the majority of tastes, and the British sherry-drinker, as a rule, demands wines softened by judicious blending. In this Señor Misa's head capataz—upon whom devolves in the poetical language of Andalusia the duty of 'bedewing the soleras,' in other words the replenishment of the butts with suitable wine in proportion as they are emptied—displays those special qualities which have earned for him the title of 'the Palate of the Bodega.' Taking a glass cylinder graduated into forty divisions representing the number of jarras required to make a butt, he composes in this, after a due amount of sniffing, tasting, and

rejecting, a mixture fulfilling the required conditions as to style, quality, and price. The proportions of the blend being chalked on a slate, the butts are ranged in readiness, with funnels fitted into their bung-holes. An arrumbador now extracts the bung from a store butt containing the wine forming the first item in the blend with a hooked spike, pops in a cane spiggot closed by a cork, and removing this cork, slips jarra after jarra in swift succession beneath the stream of wine with such wonderful dexterity as never to spill a single drop. His companions empty their jarras into the butts in the proportion required, and then item number two is drawn off in the same manner. The butts, when nearly filled, have their contents examined and corrected if necessary; and after being marked and branded, are ready for despatch along the railway siding which joins the mainline running direct to the Trocadero mole near Cadiz, whence they are shipped to their destination.

As already mentioned, the wine we know as sherry is not exclusively produced in the Jerez vineyards, the extent of demand and limit of supply rendering it necessary for the shipper to go farther afield. So-called sherry we know even comes from Hamburgh; still we will confine ourselves to more legitimate sources. The pale, delicate, dry, tonical tasting wine known as Manzanilla is grown around the little town of San Lucar de Barrameda, the low-pitched roofs of which, dominated by half-a-dozen church-towers and the solid square keep of an old Moorish fortress, and girdled by orange-groves, spread themselves at the mouth of the Guadalquivir, some fifteen miles from Jerez. Here the *modus operandi* in vineyard and

bodega is similar to that we have already described, although the soleras are slightly differently managed. On the east the vineyards of Jerez join those of Puerto de Santa Maria, yielding somewhat inferior wines to those of their neighbours. In the town which owes its name to an image of the Virgin, found there when abandoned by the Moors, some of the principal sherry shippers have their bodegas. The Puerta ships annually about 20,000 butts of sherry, and lays claim to a position inferior only to Jerez. Beyond Puerto de Santa Maria, and on the shores of the Bay of Cadiz, is the ancient Moorish town of Rota, the vineyards of which yield, in addition to the well-known Sacramental Tent, a fair quantity of passable sherry. From Puerto Real half way towards Cadiz; from Chipiona, famous for its muscatel grapes; from Chiclana beyond Cadiz, renowned as the birthplace of the most illustrious bull-fighters; and from the lonely little town of Trebujena, northward of Jerez,

—many thousand butts of wine are annually sent by rail or bullock-cart into the sherry metropolis.

But the enterprising shipper looks yet farther afield for supplies. The tract of undulating country extending from Seville to Huelva is rich in miles of vineyards, the produce of many of which serves as an excellent basis for cheap sherries. Nor must Montilla—the ancestral appanage of the Medina-Coeli, and the birthplace of the Gran Capitan Gonzalo—perched on high amidst the Cordovan sierras, be forgotten.

There is no need to revert to the discussion of a few years ago, with reference to the assumed unwholesomeness of sherry, when the reasoning of the opponents of the wine was as fallacious as their pretended facts. The absurdity of the outcry then raised has since been fully recognised; and lovers of the wine of Jerez, banishing vain alarms, may continue to follow rare Ben Jonson's sage recommendation to 'Be merry and drink sherry.'

CLUB CAMEOS.

Bohemia.

It has been well said that the one-half of the world does not know how the other half lives. We each of us move in our own sphere, follow its habits, accept its teaching, and adopt its customs. Of the vast world outside our own petty circle—of its struggles for existence, of its professional wiles, of its feuds, jealousies, and observances—we know no more than the Chinaman, who writes down all beyond his dominions as barbarians. As in geology each strata has its separate

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and distinct formation, so in social life each class has its own peculiarities of manner, industry, and amusement, which reveal the order to which it belongs. What is permitted in the one class is not tolerated in the other; what is pleasure to the one would be regarded as the most irksome of restraints by the other. If there were no lines of demarcation separating the one class from the other, the very differences in the mode of life and in the ways of thought

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would prove in themselves obstacles sufficiently insurmountable to prevent fusion between such discordant elements.

Take the Bohemian as an example. To him the fetters of civilisation are insupportable; he declines to obey the commands of society and the code of morals it draws up. The homage to rank and wealth, the emptiness of general conversation, the monotony of routine, the attention paid to outward adornment, are all eminently distasteful to him. A man generally with some pretensions to art or literature, he infinitely prefers to chat with an artist over his pictures or with an author over his manuscripts than to add his name to the crowd of nobodies which throng the reception-rooms of a lady of fashion, or to take part in the feebleness and platitudes of ordinary social talk. Fond of the society of women, he detests the society of those whom the vulgar call 'ladies of position.' A woman—no matter how humble her birth—of genius; a clever woman; a woman who is well read without being a prig; a woman who is making a name for herself by her pen, her brush, her chisel, or by her musical attainments, is always sure of his homage and respectful admiration. In the society of such an one he thinks there is the best of all companionships, the companionship of thought; whilst on the other hand the society of ladies, of women who are simply the representatives of their order, and destitute of everything but modesty and good breeding, is in his opinion an unpleasant restraint. In the presence of the woman of Bohemia he can talk without reserve, he can consult his own comfort as to the posture he adopts, he can drink and smoke in her society without wounding her self-

respect, and his brain becomes quick and teeming from the rapid interchange of ideas and the play of wit and humour. The propriety and inanities of a lady, however, freeze him up and render him dull and sulky. The Bohemian is, as a rule, singularly free from the scruples of the moralist and the antipathies of the bigot; he will make love to all who let him, and when he has money he intends to pay his debts. He is kind and generous—if it be in his power—to those who are not likely to develop into rivals; but where he fears competition he is more jealous and spiteful than would be expected from his jovial presence and careless indifference. He frequents those haunts in the town where he is sure to meet men of his own calling and addicted to his own tastes; and, except under certain special circumstances, he resents the intrusion of the followers of 'society' within his midst. In all things he consults his own ease, and refuses to hamper his pleasures by any restrictions which Mrs. Grundy may think it prudent to suggest.

He has little sympathy with certain of his brother Bohemians, who are using the reputation which their productions have gained to become acquainted with the great and to hang on to the skirts of fashion. He ridicules their pretensions and despises their ambition. To him the conviviality of his own set, the freedom which permits each one to do as he pleases, the stories that are told, the liquor that is drunk, the fun and devilry which are interwoven with the texture of their lives, surpass all that the most servile toadyism can ever expect to obtain. Your true Bohemian is never more intolerant than when attacking those who are in a superior position to his own, and running amuck at all the pro-

prieties. When by chance he meets a great man he will refute his arguments and disparage the profession to which he belongs. On the occasions when he treads upon that common ground where all worlds assemble—at flower-shows, exhibitions, musical and dramatic entertainments, and the rest—he is easily to be recognised

by his garb and his studied contempt of all the *convenances* of life. Good-humoured enough in his own circle, a spirit of the most truculent antagonism pervades all his movements and conversation when he issues into a higher grade of life than his own. He thinks his own views upon all subjects to be correct, and is apt to become

warm when contradicted. It is impossible to mistake him for aught than he is, or to identify him with the class to which he does not belong. In his dress and bearing we as plainly recognise him to be a citizen of the realm of Bohemia as we can tell the Frenchman who hails from Paris or the German whose home is in Berlin.

One such Bohemian is a member of the Caravanserai. Con-

verts are always the most fervent in the support of their new creed, and no subjects are more patriotic than those who have been naturalised. Roy Somerset Fitzgerald Capel de Beaufoy (commonly called Alphabet de Beaufoy from his ample supply of Christian names) belongs to the Bohemian world, not by birth or profession, but by inclination and preference. The son of a distinguished Irish

peer, who at one time gracefully filled the office of Viceroy of his native land, Alphabet de Beaufoy has little in common with the stock from which he has sprung. He is deficient in all the characteristics of the typical aristocrat. Little Farningham West, with his blonde locks, his large blue eyes, his aquiline nose, his short upper-lip, and the smallness of his ears, hands, and feet, possesses in an eminent degree all those 'points' which race alone, it is said, can confer. Yet we know that he is but humbly born, and for the sake of Mrs. West, who is the severest of Sabbatarians, let us hope that the principles of ethnology occasionally vary in their course of development.

No one looking at Alphabet would imagine him to belong to an exclusive order, and to be allied directly or indirectly to some of the proudest houses in the country. He is untidy in his dress, and careless as to the make and shape of his garments; as long as they keep him warm in winter and cool in summer he is utterly indifferent as to their cut or texture. He has been reproved more than once by his sisters for putting in an attendance at a fashionable marriage with an alpaca coat on his back and a straw hat on his head, simply because the event happened to take place on a warm day in June. He abominates evening attire most heartily, and considers that as long as a man's linen is clean he is in proper costume to go anywhere. On the few occasions when he drives his stanhope in the Park, or rides his mare in the Row—for he prefers, not unwisely, the attractions of the suburbs—he dons a costume more suitable for the country than for London. Only once have I seen him in a tall hat, and then he told me that he had been to church with his

mother; but even this deference to the demands of civilisation was somewhat marred by the tweed suit he had thought it convenient to wear on the occasion.

There are some men who can dispense with all the advantages of art, but De Beaufoy is hardly to be included in the category. He is not ugly (no one with those honest brown eyes of his could be positively ill-looking, and some ladies have even been known to admit that he is 'almost handsome;') but then my friend has a very good fortune left him by his grandmother); but a man with a big nose, a large laughing mouth, a complexion very much freckled, hair thin and sandy, and a figure which good living and whisky-and-water have combined most effectually to destroy, should not be offended if his friends class him amongst the ill-favoured. Yet plain in appearance and disorderly in dress, it is impossible not to take the man for a gentleman after *speaking* to him. On certain occasions, when his self-respect has been wounded, his manner is very haughty and dignified; the great monarch himself could not be more crushing in his lofty disdain than De Beaufoy when he has to suppress a cad.

When Alphabet first joined the Caravanserai, it was considered 'shocking bad form' for him always to appear in the club in a wideawake, and to dine in a shooting-coat—it was treating the club like 'a pot-house,' some said; nor do I think such remarks were uncalled for by the supreme indifference of my friend to the conventionalities of life. Little West was one of the warmest of this band of critics; when, however, he discovered that the object of his severe strictures was the son of a mighty peer, he discontinued his observations, and did his best to become acquainted with

the Bohemian. How elastic is human nature, and how much we forgive to our superiors! If Jones was to walk in the Park in a pot-hat, to enter the stalls of a theatre in a tweed suit, or to be seen outside an omnibus, he would lay himself open to being cut by his acquaintances. But if a noble Marquis dines at his club

in thick boots and velveteens, or walks up St. James's-street eating walnuts, or is seen carrying home a large parcel from the Co-operative Stores, his conduct calls forth no remark. The one is 'a cad' for acting as he does; the other is praised for being above the 'timidity of the snob.' Who after this can say that there is

not one law for the great and another for the humble?

Where civilisation has attained to its highest pitch of luxury and ostentation, as at the present day with us, there will always be men to whom its splendours and restraints will be distasteful. And as a rule those who can enjoy to the fullest extent all that a wealthy and refined civilisation has to offer will often be the very men to turn

their backs upon its charms, and go elsewhere. These know what they are rejecting; they have entered the race, found the training irksome, and have seen that the prizes are not worth the winning. On the other hand, the men who have had little opportunity for the indulgence of social pleasures—either from the intensity of their industry or from obstacles that bar their progress in society—are always

most keen in their pursuit of what wealth and rank can lay before them. The one have eaten the apple, and discovered that it is but Dead Sea fruit ; the other see the pippin hanging on the tree—red, luscious, and tempting—and with outstretched hand and watering mouth long for the moment when they can grasp it and taste its imagined sweetness.

De Beaufoy has little to learn from the great world which he does not already know. Familiar from the days of his boyhood with all the seductions that society can offer, they cease now to have any attraction for him. It is with difficulty that he can ever be persuaded to be bored by going out to dance and dinner. His Bohemian tastes interfere sadly with his family ties, for it is only under the greatest pressure that he can be made to visit his relations, or to add himself to the number of the home circle. Yet if his mother and sisters only knew how easily he accepts an invitation from an actress to breakfast, or from an actor to supper, or from a detective to go the rounds of the cribs of London, they would scarcely feel flattered.

He is Bohemian to the backbone, and only cares for Bohemia. Every single haunt in the country of his adoption he is familiar with. When he is in society he is huffy, and stands on his dignity ; outside its pale he will be on good terms with all the varied crew that cross his path. However strict may be the rules of a theatre, De Beaufoy has only to send his card round to the stage-door to be welcomed by the manager, to lounge about the greenroom, and to enter into little prandial arrangements with certain of the fair *artistes*. He belongs to a host of small clubs, which hold their meetings at a late hour of the night in cozy taverns, where the

rooms are carpeted with sawdust ; where the chairs are of the familiar Windsor pattern now relegated to kitchens ; where the tables are coverless, and of the darkest mahogany, and stained by the rings of pewter-pots and the blemishes caused by heated tumblers ; where prints of famous trotters, of ex-champions of the belt and of the river, of jockeys, statesmen, and deformities, hang against the walls ; where the cuisine is strictly limited to kidneys, chops, and steaks, served with the whitest and most flowery of potatoes ; where the wines should be shunned, but where the beer and the spirits may be depended upon ; and where the unfamed in letters and in art love to assemble. On the few occasions when it has been my good fortune to meet the magnates of authorship, I have invariably been disappointed with their powers of conversation. Their wit seems forced, their stories are old, and their talk is halting and hesitating, as if they knew that they were impostors, and on the point of being found out. In many an anteroom I have listened to far more wit and humour from men who could not write a page without committing themselves to errors in grammar and orthography.

Yet I must admit that when Alphabet has taken me into one of these obscure haunts as his guest, it has seldom been my lot to come away from the kindly dens disappointed. O those evenings, or rather nights, or rather mornings ! How bright was the wit, how exquisitely droll, though somewhat naughty, the stories ! how good were the songs ! how jokes and keen, but not malicious, chaff went the round ! and how queer and uncouth were many of the members, and what a terrible dryness of throat seemed to afflict every one of the community ! There they were—actors

scarcely a remove from supers ; journalists who were really little better than penny-a-liners ; artists sketching for magazines, or painting for the dealers at famine prices ; stage-managers of theatres one never heard of ; authors who had to put their big thoughts away, and slave for the publishers as hacks ; a few barristers who had never held a brief, but who, from their remarks, seemed worthy to occupy the seat on the bench vacated by an eminent Lord Chief Baron who at one time held his court in the Strand ; one or two men whom drink had ' broke,' and who were picking up a livelihood as best they could ; and a sprinkling of what some of the club called ' swells from the West-end.' What a motley lot ! full of fun and devilry and brandy-and-water ! They appeared to regard life as one gigantic joke, and to look upon him who was the funniest comedian as the best man amongst them. Never had I been made to laugh so much. The very appearance of some of the men, the expressions they used when discussing any question that came up, their wholesale irreverence for the leaders of their different professions, were all intensely amusing. Added to this, there was much real brilliancy in the conversation during the earlier part of the evening, till the talk unhappily became blended with spirits-and-water ; whilst there were two men whose voices would have commanded high prices on the stage or in concert-rooms, could their sobriety only have been guaranteed. In such company even the great Dr. Johnson himself would have refrained from moralising. It is the next morning, when the tongue is parched and the brow is fevered, that we moralise. ' Those fellows do make me laugh,' said De Beaufoy, as we returned westwards ; ' if

we only had one or two of them at Pratt's !'

Reading a novel some nights ago, I was much amused at certain ideas of the talented authoress touching Bohemia. The fair and gifted creature was evidently under the impression that there is a certain quarter in our capital which is as much the haunt of the Bohemian as Pall Mall is of the club-man. In this curious *faubourg*, we are told, the inhabitants consist entirely of artists, authors, journalists, actors, sculptors, and entertainers of the public. It has its own special clubs and taverns and places of amusement. None but the Bohemian is admitted within this privileged quarter ; and it is subject to its own laws, which it has power to enforce by fine or punishment upon the refractory. I need hardly say that, except in the fertile imagination of the novelist, no such *imperium in imperio* exists.

As Satan in *Paradise Lost* is made to say that wherever he goes he makes a hell, so the Bohemian, wherever he pitches his tent, makes a Bohemia. Let De Beaufoy wander where he list, he is sure to surround himself with Bohemians. Though he flies the ensign of 'the Squadron,' he shuns all the fascinations of Cowes ; but is generally to be found off the coast of Scotland or Ireland, where he is the patron of whalers, herring fishermen, coastguard-men, pilots, and the officials connected with the lighthouses and lifeboats. When becalmed or fond of a certain spot, he is a godsend to every one in the harbour, and to the seafaring community around. He gets up sailing-matches amongst the owners of the herring-smacks, rowing-matches and swimming-matches, and is most liberal in the distribution of prizes in the shape of tankards, kegs of whisky, ready

money, and tablets of honeydew tobacco. Should a storm arise, and the lifeboat of the place distinguish itself, he invites the crew to a supper at a tavern, and shines as the most noisy and jovial of hosts. He avoids the countryhouses of the neighbourhood like the plague; but he can talk by the hour to an old salt, and is the best and thirstiest listener imaginable to a yarn. Alphabet is no fool or 'chalk yachtsman.' He has studied harder in Thames-street than most men do at the University, and has obtained his certificate from the Board of Trade. The sailors know that, though he is a 'swell,' he is as smart an amateur seaman as there is afloat; and captains of barques have more than once been indebted to him for downright professional assistance.

Like many men passionately fond of the sea, Alphabet is but a lukewarm lover of the pleasures of the chase. He has a little hunting-box about fifty miles from London; and if a bad rider to hounds, he is at least a bold one, for he cranes at nothing, though he has come terribly to grief on more than one occasion. When a frost sets in, I fancy he is not keenly disappointed; for at such times he drives over to the stables of a neighbouring trainer of great repute, and is far happier chatting with that gentleman over some old dry sherry, hearing anecdotes about the days of the turf past and present, inspecting the horses, and talking to the jockeys, than when pursuing the wily fox. He is a good shot, but in his eyes there is no sport more attractive than at the dead of night to join with the keepers in a free-fight with the poachers. Those guardians of the game for miles around always let 'the honourable' know when they expect battle, and seldom does he fail to put in an

appearance. Some men have a weakness for driving locomotives, others for attending conflagrations and working the fire-engine, and others for slaving at a printing-press. The weakness of De Beaufoy is a moonlight night, the rides of a wood, and a hand-to-hand encounter between a dozen men and a dozen poachers. It is fortunate for the poachers that the law limits Alphabet's powers of punishment as a magistrate, else those sneaking purloiners would never receive a more lenient sentence than five years' penal servitude.

Whenever an opportunity presents itself De Beaufoy runs up to London. Like your true Bohemian, he is always happy in a crowd, with the bustle of life going on around him, the fun of the fair presenting itself at every step, agitation, noise, confusion, amusement at every turn. The theatre is his favourite pastime, and he must be on the high seas, or else there must be very good reason for his absence when he fails to attend the performances of a first night. He is extremely fond of discovering obscure talent, and more than one young actor owes his elevation to the London boards to the interest and discrimination of my friend, who has been struck by his playing in the provinces. Sunday is the favourite day for De Beaufoy to give his dinners at the Caravanserai, because that day is generally the only one at the disposal of the actors, who are sure to be amongst his guests. There is scarcely a theatre in town where his presence is not welcome in the greenroom, and there is not a play brought out but that he forms part of the audience which listens to its first reading. Intimately acquainted with modern dramatic literature, De Beaufoy would make an excellent news-

paper critic were he forced to write for his living. More than once, at some of his tavern haunts, have I heard him, after the first night of a new piece, correcting the surmises of dramatic critics as to the source of the new play, showing what was original in it and what was plagiarised, and giving chapter and verse for his authority.

Actresses like him, not simply because he is very generous and peculiarly susceptible to the charms of a pretty face and of a well-moulded figure, but because, having travelled much, and having been acquainted with most of the leading actors in Europe, he has been really of service to them in the creation of their characters. I

know one young actress who made a great hit in a part, and yet her idea of the character was due, not to the originality of her genius, but solely to the teaching of De Beaufoy, who had seen when at Dresden an obscure German actress in a rôle of a similar kind.

Anything new, or any one who is making a sensation, is sure of finding in De Beaufoy a patron

and friend. Is a comic singer the rage, is a gymnast particularly clever on the trapeze, has a pedestrian made himself famous by his walking powers, has a new comic author appeared, Alphabet will make his acquaintance, and if the man is presentable ask him to supper at a certain excellent hostel not a hundred miles from Covent Garden. Is there a man or woman noted for gigantic stature,

enormous bulk, or some extraordinary malformation, De Beaufoy is sure to be among those present at the earliest medical investigation. His curiosity is boundless. He visits prisons, lunatic asylums, convict establishments, and, thanks to the protection of friendly detectives, he knows every thieves' kitchen in London as well as if he had lived all his years in the atmosphere of Scotland Yard. The low life of the town, the society of those in an inferior grade to his own, intercourse with

that great body of the community whose object it is to amuse the public by their peculiar gifts, have attractions for him which are irresistible. His fortune, his name, his social surroundings, have placed him in the order of the patricians; but in tastes, habits, and sympathies nature has marked him out as a proletarian. As the age of miracles is past it cannot be expected that he will ever be transformed into other than he is. He will live and die a Bohemian.

TRUFFLES.

PHYSICISTS want to know all about everything, for the sole and disinterested sake of knowing. It matters not to them what the object may be, whether a plant of strange propensities, an infant crab, a suggestive embryo, or a strange condition of matter ; it is equally welcome, provided that it either teaches something itself, or points to the road along which good teaching may be met with. The result of the inquiry may promise no practical advantage. The investigation is no less eagerly pursued, for the knowledge acquired is a sufficient reward.

All physical research, however, is not barren. Instead of turning out to be merely intellectual wealth, many objects sought for, could they only be found, would lead to almost boundless fortune. Not to mention the elixir of life and the philosopher's stone, which the bulk of philosophers have given up, there would be little difficulty in becoming a millionaire by the discovery of an antidote to canine madness, or even of the true explanation and prevention of sea-sickness.

In like manner, if we ask, 'What is a truffle?' it is not merely to clear up a curious point of natural history, which most people believe to be already settled, but to ascertain the means of increasing the supply of an article which fetches, when obtained, handsome sums of money. Truffles are by no means vulgar; their strange nature and their rarity save them from that. For two good reasons, they are unsought and uncared

for by the British million. The first reason, that they are always costly, absolves me from discussing the second. For although the price of truffles varies from year to year, they are never cheap enough to be freely indulged in by large families with limited incomes. A truffled turkey may run up to 3*l.*, or 4*l.*, or more ; a truffled pheasant to one-third or one-half of that sum ; a truffled partridge to proportionally less, according to the quantity and quality of the precious tuber inserted.

The truffling is done by stuffing the bird with scraped or peeled truffles, whole or divided, as size may happen to be, mixed with seasoned sausage-meat or finely-chopped ham or bacon. The longer the interval that can be allowed to elapse between the truffling and the roasting, the more thoroughly the aroma will pervade the flesh and the more complete the epicure's approval.

Without indulging in so heavy an outlay, a turkey may be truffled economically, thus : For a small bird, take a quarter or a third of a pound, for a large one, half a pound, of truffles. Large tubers are to be preferred, with the fewest irregularities on their surface. Smell them, to be sure they are not mouldy. Wash them carefully, scrubbing off with a soft brush every particle of earth or grit that sticks to them ; let them drain and dry. Do not peel them ; but slice them across as thin as possible.

Skin and boil a good quantity

• of the best chestnuts; let them cool. Mix your sliced truffles with these, and with them fill the *body* of your turkey two or three days before it is to be cooked. On the day of cooking, fill the *crop* of the bird with ordinary stuffing containing a few bits of truffle intermixed; then roast it. Serve accompanied by its own gravy in a hot sauce-boat. This mode, which is elegant and yet unpretending, gives quite as liberal a sight and taste of truffles as will be cared for by people who are not professedly fond of them, and more than enough to satisfy many, for the love of truffles is an acquired taste. Novices make light of them, talk about turnips and tar, or even refuse to eat them because they are black. Mr. Worthington G. Smith, in his excellent manual, *Mushrooms and Toadstools* (which, with its sheets of coloured figures, ought to have a place in every country house and village library), confesses that, at first, he regarded the truffle with the greatest loathing; but that he now esteems it according to its true value, acknowledging that it makes a capital ingredient for gravies, stuffings, and meat-pies. In consequence of the ever-varying price of French truffles, no estimate can be given of the probable cost of economically truffled turkey.

Perhaps the best-known guise in which truffles present themselves here is in that excellent association with the livers of geese familiar to the civilised world as *pâté de foie gras*; which also, although certainly much better than, is almost as dear as the insensate dishes of peacocks' brains and nightingales' tongues. Still, even in those high-priced *pâtés*, truffles enter in quite modest proportion. They just serve, by black spots and

slices, to vein and relieve the dull-gray breccia-like mass of the livers. Yet more homœopathic is the dose of truffles vouchsafed to sundry *terrines*, each of which has its local reputation, composed of larks, thrushes, snipes, wild ducks, woodcocks, or whatever game the place is noted for. In France, the most popular preparation, which allows you to see little bits of truffle, and to fancy that you taste them, is *piéds de porc truffés*, truffled pigs' feet; these, obtained from the north of France, will easily travel to London while the weather is cool. Their price, moreover, is moderate. All the cooking they require is to be set into a briek, not a burning, oven for twenty minutes before serving.

French cooks of the old school thought there could never be too many truffles at a set state dinner. On wealthy tables they were made to appear, in some shape or another, in each successive course, making what we should now call the most incongruous alliances, such as with salad, fish, and Frenchified forms of plum-pudding! Now they are rarely served alone, as we serve mushrooms, though Mr. Smith mentions native truffles as a great delicacy boiled, or simply roasted in hot ashes. These are the specimens which, in Covent-garden Market, will realise at times, he says, as much as five shillings per pound. Never having tasted British tubers, I can only guess that, for reasons to be stated, they are inferior to, perhaps different in flavour from, the French samples which often command three or four times five shillings per pound.

The object, however, of the present paper is not the spread of gastronomical knowledge, but the announcement of a heresy. What is a truffle? That is the question.

'The diamond of the kitchen,' says Brillat-Savarin; which does not help us much. Everybody thinks he knows, on authority, that the truffle is an underground cryptogamic plant. The late Dr. Badham (in *Esculent Funguses*) briefly says: 'This plant, the common truffle of our markets, is abundant in Wiltshire and some other parts of England, and probably occurs in many places where it escapes observation from its subterranean habits.' A distinguished living fungologist, Worthington G. Smith, tells us: 'The truffle is a subterranean fungus, invariably found under trees.... Besides the truffle sold in Covent-garden Market, there are, according to Berkeley, nearly forty other species found in this country, of various forms and qualities.'

This ought to be conclusive. Nevertheless, practical truffle-farmers and truffle-hunters are far from satisfied with that explanation. Present circumstances not permitting me to visit truffle-grounds in actual produce, I express no opinion in the matter, but content myself with briefly mentioning facts tending to prove that the truffle is still a mystery.

In last year's Paris Exhibition, there was a building devoted to the details of French forestry, many of which details were explained by official treatises (*Administration des Forêts*) emanating from the Ministère de l'Agriculture et du Commerce, and printed at the Imprimerie Nationale. One of these publications, intended for the instruction of those whom it might concern, was *Etudes sur la Truffe*, par A. George-Grimblot, Inspecteur des Forêts, who was appointed to oversee the forests of Avignon in January 1873; and he has the courage to give his own solution of the problem, 'What is

a truffle?' although opposed to the received conclusions of science.

The first thing which struck him was the importance of truffles in money value. The truffle-hunting alone, in productive forests, lets for several hundreds, or even thousands, of francs; while, to show the diversity of the yield, the rent of others is under a hundred francs a year.

The scene of M. Grimblot's investigations, the Department of Vaucluse, is traversed by chains of mountains. Now he found that the truffle, to be produced in good condition, needs a certain intensity and duration of solar influence, which, amidst hills, are only realised on southern aspects. Moreover, above a certain altitude, good and plentiful truffles are not to be looked for. If this is the case in the climate of Provence, what is to be expected in more northern latitudes and less sunny regions like the British Isles?

The truffle is essentially a native of chalky soils; the subsoil must be permeable, at the same time that too dry a soil is unfavourable. The presence of trees is indispensable. Truffles are found in the open glades which traverse the slopes and level parts of forests. They are produced at the foot of many different *essences*, as the French call the various species of trees and shrubs, but especially at the foot of oaks; so much so that, for practical study, we may confine ourselves to the grand divisions of deciduous and evergreen oaks, the latter thriving on the plain and on warm hillsides, the former (whether with sessile or pedunculated acorns) on the mountain and exposed situations.

The question has been raised whether certain races of oaks are hereditarily more favourable to truffles than others; i.e. whether

acorns from good truffle-yielding oaks will produce trees of like meritorious quality. Those who hold the affirmative have been able to sell their acorns dear; but the belief has not been confirmed by experiment.

Two crops, therefore, wood and truffles, are thus obtained from the same area of forest-ground. Occasionally the truffles fetch more than half as much as the wood. Certain forests near Carpentras yield more than 1000*l.*'s worth of truffles annually.

A curious phenomenon to be observed in the forests of Vaucluse is the gradual disappearance of non-arborescent vegetation on spots which are promising and preparing to yield truffles (a process which sometimes lasts several years), and its complete absence from truffle-grounds in actual production. Not only do mosses and grasses disappear, but thyme, lavender, and other low-growing shallow-rooted ligneous vegetables. As soon as the truffle-ground ceases to yield, herbaceous vegetation rapidly reappears on its surface. M. Grimblot refers the cause to chemical action.

Two theories are current respecting the origin and nature of the truffle. First, and most generally accepted, that it is a fungus; secondly, that it is a gall, proceeding from the same cause as the galls found on the leaves and branches of trees and shrubs—namely, in this case, the puncture of an insect on the roots of the oaks beneath whose shade the truffles are found.

Now several remarkable facts are undeniable. Without trees there are no truffles; exactly as far as the roots extend, they may be successfully searched for, but no farther; beyond the radius of the circle occupied by the roots, there are none; as the radicles

of a tree extend, or are diverted by disturbance into another direction, the truffles follow. The most inexperienced truffle-dog will tell you that it is as utterly useless to scratch and scrape for truffles in the open, treeless, shrubless plain as to dig for potatoes in the Mer de Glace.

Again, no one has yet succeeded in propagating truffles horticulturally as we do mushrooms. They cannot be made to increase and multiply by cuttings, spores, spawn, or any other known mode of increase. Nobody has caused a single truffle-spore to germinate; nobody has discovered incontestably its mycelium or prolific threads. Often, on the contrary, truffles not bigger than peas have been turned up, perfectly free and devoid of filaments. Often has M. Grimblot followed the truffle-hunters; but never has the soil disturbed by their pigs presented the least trace of mycelium, either around the tubercles or in the contiguous earth. Pigs, be it noted—the original guild of truffle-finders; dogs are only modern interlopers—are preferred, in that department, to discover the presence of the delicacy sought for. M. Grimblot mentions, in flattering terms, 'an excellent sow' which aided his researches.

An old mushroom-bed, employed when exhausted to manure a garden, will cause mushrooms to spring up, sometimes for months afterwards, on the spots in the open ground where it has been applied; but no such result is to be obtained by transferring earth from truffle-grounds to other localities.

The decayed remains of any vegetable are supposed to be the best manure for the growth of that vegetable, because they restore to the soil the elements of which it has been deprived.

Hence the expectation was entertained that crops of truffles might be increased by manuring with rejected portions of truffles. Now the pâté- and terrine-makers of Carpentras have a considerable quantity of truffle-peeling to dispose of, and M. Rousseau, a neighbouring landowner, tried the experiment several times over. But instead of favouring the production, this application brought it to a sudden standstill.

Truffle-beds do not shift their place or spread like the fairy rings formed by certain fungi. They are stationary, so to speak, never extending beyond the area occupied by the roots of the productive or protective tree. Lastly, the mycelium of fungi having the property of almost completely absorbing the alkalis and the phosphoric acid contained in the soil where it is developed, which elements chemical analysis proves to be indispensable to the truffle, it follows that truffle-grounds ought to be exhausted in the course of a few years, unless they obtain the needful materials from some other sources of supply; whereas there exist in Vaucluse, at Bedoin, Pernes, St. Saturnin, &c., truffle-beds, unfailingly productive, occupying the same spot, whose tutelary oaks are from sixty to eighty years old, or even older. This, however, is not the rule, which may be taken at from twenty to thirty years. But where will you find a mushroom-bed which continues productive without renewal for twenty years? All these circumstances are at variance with the cryptogamic theory of truffle-growth.

True, in Vaucluse the foresters make what are called *truffières artificielles*; that is, the ground is put into conditions which permit truffles to grow there, if, and when, they will. How, is far from

being ascertained. With this object an oak wood is made—either by sowing acorns or planting young trees in November and December—evergreen species on sunny slopes, deciduous in exposed situations. The young plants are kept clean from weeds, and hoed in summer to encourage their growth. In ten years the yield of truffles will begin. In five years more the trees must be thinned out to wider distances, the thinning to be renewed when judged advisable. From ten to fourteen feet from tree to tree is found a sufficient interval.

Whence come the truffles thus coaxed into existence, and what is their real parentage? M. Grimbolot will not admit that they are galls resulting from the puncture of an insect, as suggested by those who perceive the difficulties of the fungus theory. At certain times, swarms of flies may be seen hovering over the surface of the truffle-grounds; and it was concluded that those insects were the cause of the radical galls or truffles. But if this were the case, the truffle ought to be found adhering to the parent root, exactly as galls hang attached to the leaves and branches on which they grow. Now, out of a whole year's crop, hardly a single tuber will be met with, even in accidental contact with an oak-root. Moreover, the larva of the gall-forming insect ought to be found within the fresh-dug truffle, issuing from it afterwards in the perfect state, which is never the case; although truffles left to rot in the ground will contain not one, but several larvæ, like decaying fruits, mushrooms, or putrid flesh.

The truffle, if neither gall nor mushroom, must nevertheless be something. *Ex nihilo, nihil fit.*

If you lop a tree into pollard

shape, you disturb the ordinary production and elaboration of sap; if you cut the tree down to a stool or stock, you suppress it altogether. Now an oak copse, after lopping, ceases to yield truffles, and takes five or six years to become again productive. The production is invariably found to correspond with the development of the branches and foliage. When a young oak begins to yield, the truffles are found almost at the very foot. At that period, its radicular system consists of a taproot descending more or less vertically, with short lateral fibres. By and by, the lateral main roots are developed and spread from the tap-root, as from a centre. The truffles follow the progress of the roots. When the truffle-bed is approaching its end, and no more young fibres are put forth, except at the very extremity of the oak-roots, it is only quite at the circumference of the circle that the last truffles are to be obtained.

From these and other considerations, M. Grimblot draws the conclusion that truffles are produced by radicular excretion of elaborated sap from the roots of the oak-trees. Unless this is the case, it is impossible to understand

the intimate connection which exists between the vegetative vigour of the trees, and the abundance with which truffles appear beneath them. Whatever favours the elaboration of sap—sunshine, luxuriant foliage, moderate moisture—also favours the crop of truffles. On an open naked plain, there is not a truffle. Sow the plain with acorns, or plant it with oaks, and, after a certain lapse of time, when the trees are in full growth, you may dig out truffles from the earth at their feet. Surely those oak-trees are the cause of their presence; for before they were planted, not a truffle was to be found.

M. Grimblot's reasoning, to do it full justice, ought to be stated at greater length and completeness; but enough has been said to indicate the purport of the novel theory. *Savans* and naturalists will consult his original treatise, perhaps, before utterly condemning, certainly before accepting, his ideas. For the majority of our readers, if the question appears too dry or unimportant, they can find some slight consolation and refreshment in a crust crowned with a slice of truffle-mottled pâté, helped down by a glass of good old Médoc.

LIFE IN THE ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY.

BY A GENTLEMAN-CADET.

It was in the autumn of the year 18— that I first made acquaintance with the Royal Military Academy. A previous glimpse of it I had certainly had, just before the competitive examination in Burlington Gardens, at which I had been lucky enough to be successful; for the medical inspection was at that time held in the School of Arms, with which I was destined in after years to become so well acquainted; but on that occasion my attention was too much taken up with the

ingenious artifices by which the doctors evaded any possibility of a candidate, defective in eyesight or in hearing, escaping detection, to form much idea of the Academy itself. Some vague recollection I had of figures in blue tunics with red facings and gold forage-caps, and of a sound of trumpets; but beyond that the place which I was about to enter was to me a veritable *terra incognita*. However, I was light-hearted enough at the prospect before me; and the congratulations of my friends had, I

fear, produced in me a considerable amount of conceit, which caused me already to imagine myself somebody.

I got out at the Arsenal Station together with a number of other youths, whose faces I recognised as having been amongst those which I had been wont to study in the intervals of abstraction, when ideas would not come, at the never-to-be-forgotten room in Burlington Gardens. The porters at the little dingy station seemed at once to recognise us as their lawful prey, and our luggage and belongings were seized upon when scarcely out of the van. However, to do them justice, if somewhat rapacious, they were civil enough, and we were speedily *en route* for the Academy.

Twenty minutes' drive brought us to the gates; and here, seeing the size of the building, a doubt began to occur to us as to where we ought to direct the cabby to drive to. However, the latter functionary had acted as Jehu to too many embryo cadets not to know the ways of the establishment; and accordingly brought us up to the place where a sergeant, resplendent in all the glory of his new gold lace, was standing. This latter escorted us to a room where the adjutant was waiting, and where we deposited our 'contribution' for the half year (the sum of 62*l.* 10*s.* in my case), and signed a declaration that we would abide by the laws and regulations of the Academy. Then we received each a piece of paper with the number of his room and the letter of his house written on it, and were straightway dismissed to find our way thither as best we might.

My first view of my apartment did not by any means prepossess me in its favour. There was no one in it at the time, as, I found afterwards, its other three occu-

pants were absent at study, so that I had ample time to form my opinion upon the place. Imagine, then, a square room with bare whitewashed walls, the stones of which protruded here and there in all their pristine roughness. There was a large window; but far from giving a cheery appearance to the room, it had the contrary effect, from being covered on the inside with a diamond-pattern grating of strong iron bars, painted a dull ochre, and at present embellished by two or three sponges sticking in the openings. Underneath this window ran a ledge, on which were placed four basins of galvanised iron, and beneath which were four corresponding zinc cans, or 'toshers,' as I found they were called in the slang of the Academy. Add to these a wooden table and four Windsor chairs, together with four beds of the ordinary soldier's pattern, made to fold up during the daytime on a hinge in the centre, and you have the furniture complete. A coal-box of course there was, and also a set of fire-irons; but beyond that—nothing.

I went outside to make a survey of the external arrangements. At the back of each house was a stone-flagged open courtyard, on the farther side of which was a low range of buildings, containing a number of separate compartments, each containing a tub numbered to correspond with a room.

By this time there was a noise of footsteps; the great clock in the library struck, and the cadets came pouring in from the several classrooms. But as this paper is intended to be a mere sketch of the general style of life at the Academy, I shall not weary my readers with accounts of individual characters; they can meet so many themselves in their own

lives—more by far than they will ever be able to understand.

Now, therefore, for a little of the inner life of the 'shop.' The latter word is the name by which the institution is universally known amongst the cadets, and even amongst the officers of the scientific corps, though its origin is obscure. Like doubtful hieroglyphics, there are many interpretations, any one of which may be the right one, and which are all equally plausible. In fact, the Academy, like most other old-established institutions, has a language of its own and customs of its own, handed down from generation to generation, and preserved, even in the present Radical century, by the innate Conservatism of the army. A few of these customs we hope to lay before our readers, and trust that they will have some interest for them.

The first and great principle of the Academy is, that the last-joined, or 'snookers,' as they are familiarly termed, are to be sat upon as much as possible, lest they should become too conceited with themselves. This task is confided almost exclusively to the cadets of the second term, who, having just themselves escaped from the thralldom of the lowest class, are naturally ready to do unto others as they have been done to. With this end, a number of minor and purely arbitrary regulations have been handed down, from time immemorial, as to the things which 'snookers' may not do. They may not wear the strap of their forage-caps otherwise than under the chin; may not presume to walk upon the sacred floor of the School of Arms when the band is performing; may not wear capes within the precincts of the Academy. Any infringement of these regulations is considered as 'cheek,' and dealt

with by the summary process of 'turning up,' which last certainly deserves a paragraph to itself.

I have already mentioned that all the iron beds of the cadets are made to fold up on a pair of hinges in the centre during the daytime. When, therefore, a last-joined has been seen to commit some act of 'cheek,' it is incumbent upon the senior cadet of his room to send out to some other of his own class word that 'So-and-so is to be turned up.' In pursuance of the order, inevitable as fate, the culprit is awakened from sleep by finding his heels suddenly describing an arc, and arriving finally at a point as nearly as possible directly over his head. His first impulse is to make a violent effort to bring the end of his couch down again; but an ominous weight on the top causes him to reflect that his regulation portmanteau is there, and will be an unpleasant object to receive upon his head. Either, therefore, he must wriggle out in a most undignified manner at the side of the bed, or else wait, in an equally undignified position, until it pleases his judges to let him down again. In either case the shock to his feelings is severe, and most effective in making him recognise his true place in the social scale of the Academy.

Another use which these beds may be put to is almost equally ingenious. The punishments at the 'shop' for minor offences, such as want of smartness on parade, &c., consist of extra marching-drills, known irreverently as 'hock-stirs.' The cadet who is unlucky enough to come in for one of these is obliged to turn out at 6 A.M., which in winter, when the mornings are dark and frosty, has a very sufficiently deterrent effect. Of course, to wake at that hour would be beyond the capabilities of any

ordinary individual, so the resource adopted is to put a regulation Wellington boot under one of the legs of the bed in the evening. Next morning, when the servant comes in for the dirty boots, he recognises the signal, and awakens the unhappy youth from his peaceful slumber.

As of course there is only one tub for each room, it is the privilege of the head of the room to go last to perform his ablutions, and thus to have some minutes' more sleep. The 'snooker' is held responsible for getting up in time to let the others dress before turn out. The Academy authorities go on the sensible principle, that a man who cannot stand a little hardship has not a constitution suiting him for military life; and it certainly requires a good stamina to be able to run across a courtyard covered with snow, break the ice on a tub, bathe in it, and then run back the same way. Yet since I entered the Academy, I never heard of a single case of any disease of the chest brought on by such causes.

As to amusements, the 'shop' is full of them. There is a splendid library, which, though almost burned down in 1873, has since been restocked with an array of books which would make many a man envious of a month's access to them. There are billiard-rooms, racket-courts, skittle-alleys, gymnastics, lawn-tennis, and, in fact, almost every athletic amusement which could be wished for, and on which the officer who has got his commission often looks back with regret from his room in the casemate of some solitary fort on the edge of the sea. Leave can always be obtained from 2 P.M. on Saturday till the last train on Sunday night; but the proximity of London has made it necessary for the authorities to impose cer-

tain restrictions upon this privilege. At the commencement of each term a cadet must bring with him a list of those friends whom his parents wish him to visit, and it is only on the production of a letter of invitation from one of these that he can obtain leave.

About three evenings in the week the Artillery band performs in the School of Arms, and the cadets generally take the opportunity of practising dancing with one another, the result of which is that the officers of the scientific corps are well known in the garrison towns for their proficiency in the art. Fencing, gymnastics, riding, and swimming form part of the regular course of studies; so that the body is not nearly so much neglected in comparison with the mind, as seems to be the prevalent impression. Indeed, despite all that has been said to its disadvantage, the present competitive system has most undoubtedly the effect in practice of bringing the best men to the front, and I may add the best officers also.

Not the least popular, and certainly in some respects the most useful, of the amusements provided for the gentlemen-cadets is a fine workshop fitted for work both in wood and in metal, containing steam-turning lathes with all the latest improvements. Here the gift of handiness which some favoured ones possess comes well to the fore; and some of the productions of cadets are fit to rank with those of skilled workmen. It would be difficult to exaggerate the value of this mode of recreation, or of that of photography, which is also taught to those who care to learn it, and to which the engraving accompanying this paper is owing. Of latter years many of the old customs of the Academy have begun to die out,

and soon, no doubt, they will be things of the past. Of late, too, the authorities have thought it advisable to add another wing to the building, with the intention of giving every cadet a room to himself. When that is accomplished, the old traditions will fade away very fast indeed. It may be better so, and certainly it will tend much to the comfort of the last-joined ; but whether the present age is not one that is too fond of comfort, and has too small regard to the good effect of a little

'roughing it' upon most dispositions, is, I think, more than doubtful. Some of us will be sorry for the old days, however, no matter what the new ones are like, though perhaps few who talk of the 'good old times' would like to go back to them. If I have given my readers the idea that, at least in the present customs of the Academy, there is no actual harm or unkindness, and a good deal of real common sense, though clad in a somewhat ludicrous garb, I shall be quite satisfied.

ON THE THREE-CORNERED WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS.

ONE is often met with the remark, more just than such epigrammatic remarks are apt to be, that every man is a philosopher, every woman an actress. Without entering into the second limb of this classification, which opens up a bewildering subject for contemplation, we limit ourselves to the philosophising tendency of the human animal. As fast as a man accumulates the facts of experience, he argues on them, classifies them, formulates them into laws. The facts of human life and feeling are as much facts as any of those on which scientific systems are built up. It will be found that any philosophy of human life is essentially three-cornered; that is to say, that human life readily lends itself to one of three methods of contemplation and practice. A great deal may be said for each of these views. Each has its distinct school of disciples; and very often the same man has passed through

these three different schools. It will be recollected how Mr. Gladstone, in going through that process of thinking upon his legs which so often describes the character of his oratory, generally points out that there are three courses which are open, and then proceeds to argue in favour of one of those courses, giving it a distinct preference. I propose to follow, *haud passibus æquis*, the great Gladstonian precedent. Every philosopher, that is to say every man, naturally takes an optimistic or a pessimistic view of human life. There is, however, a third and more excellent way, a truer and more philosophical way as it seems to me, which will not force facts into the groove of a theory; but accepting them for what they are and for what they are worth, and arbitrating between the two conflicting theories, will strike out a third view of a cheerful and more Christian-like character.

If we look at the way in which different people regard different events, these tendencies will come out more clearly. A man is taken ill. The pessimist at once concludes that he will never get better; and the optimist, though grave symptoms may be developed, never entertains the idea that things may go wrong with him. They transfer similar trains of reasons to the cases of their friends. A man drops into a fortune. The optimist, who, as a rule, is a very good kind of fellow, thinks that his friend has now a chance and a career. The pessimist declares that this is the only thing that was wanting to complete his physical and moral ruin. The pessimist entertains the gloomiest views of the state and prospects of society. It is going to the bad, to the dogs, to the devil. The optimist looks forward to the time when gaols and hospitals and workhouses will not be wanted; when moral and intellectual failure will be unknown; when the human subject, healthy and long lived, will blossom into the incomparable Osiris. If a man be ever so wicked, committing all the deadly sins at a terrible rate, the optimist, like his amiable prototype Charles Lamb, will only lament that he should be such an 'eccentric character.' Whereas the pessimist, should any unoffending person tread on his mental, pedal, or political corns, denounces him as a ruffian, an insupportable rascal, a destructive, a blackguard, and would wish to sweep him from his path like an avalanche. How often in domestic life do we see the father fretful and presageful of evil, doubtful for himself and doubtful for the children, while the optimist good mother throws the rainbow of promise over the future of her boys and girls! At least my

friends let us have the privilege of hoping. Let us hold our judgments in suspense, our opinions in solution; let us make allowances, take broad views of things, be kindly and charitable; but at the same time avoid 'the falsehood of extremes.'

Now your regular optimist is not quite the sort of man that one really cares for. As a rule he is a smug kind of Philistine. Heaven may be all very well in its way; but he asks for no better heaven than his own 'diggins,' of course with some addition thereto in the way of money or money's worth. He is like the fine lady who thought that heaven would be 'just like the London season, only pleasanter, because there would be no bores.' He is perfectly satisfied with everything. He never denies himself anything. He himself essentially belongs to 'the sty of Epicurus.' It never occurs to him that there is any place for improvement in himself or his belongings. Fed up to the eyelids himself, it is no care to him that there are other people all otherwise than so well off. Perfectly satisfied in his own small nature, he recks nothing of any 'hunger of the heart' that may be the case with others. Of course such a man in an unmodified form is conceited and ignorant and stupid.

Let it be granted, however, that there is an optimism which rises to a higher strain than this—a spiritual and not a carnal optimism. Some people really believe that everything really happens to them for the best. If a man breaks his leg, for instance, he will argue that this is all for the best. As a case in point, there is good Bernard Gilpin, who was summoned up to London to answer respecting diverse matters which came unpleasantly under the statute *De hæretico comburendo*.

On his way he broke his leg, which he took very cheerfully, feeling quite sure that it was all for the best. And, in fact, Mary died and Elizabeth succeeded in those days, and his life was saved. And your thorough-going optimist has an extremely pleasant theory that everything is for the best, and that he would not disturb anything on any account. Now I am quite willing to allow that there may be a 'soul of good in things evil,' and that a divine alchemy may extract blessed results from evil conditions. Still, how can one say that there is any positive result of good in the aspect of vice, misery, and ignorance around us? One might as well extract sunshine from cucumbers as consolation from such evils. The object must be as speedily and thoroughly as possible to modify or extirpate the evil. That is a bad kind of optimism which is content to leave things as they are. But I go in for what medical men call 'conservatory surgery.' If there is anything worth keeping, let it be kept. Do not be in a hurry to amputate the limb if there is a chance of healing the wound. But, at the same time, if there be this great hurt and harm, I cannot indorse the stoical dogma that the pain is no evil. If a man has lost his front tooth, or has been a shareholder in the Glasgow Bank, or has broken his collar-bone, or been rejected by the woman he really loves, that seems to me an unnatural kind of optimism that takes it all for the best. At least, such an opinion has to be argued on supernatural, and not on natural, ground. Such evils may be overruled for good, but such things are not good in themselves. They may happen, as Plato says, neither with nor yet without a Providence—*οὐδὲ μετὰ οὐδὲ ἄνευ Θεοῦ*. The true

optimism lies, not in believing that all things are best, but in making the best of all things. What wonderful instances of this has our House of Commons afforded in such men as Mr. Fawcett and Mr. Kavanagh! A life may be maimed in more ways than by a bodily evil. But in whatever way the maim and injury may come, a man should still consider that life is a supremely good gift, and accept it in the way that it comes to him, resolved to live courteously and bravely; and though he cannot so far hoodwink his reason as to call things by wrong names, as far as this world goes, yet he may think that 'behind the veil,' could he only penetrate it, there may be a higher reason for things to which he cannot as yet attain.

It is like going from the cheerful sunshine into a vault to examine the pessimistic corner of the philosophy of life. No doubt there are at times veins of the deepest sadness in the sensitive human spirit. Those lines of Tennyson's,

'Tears, idle tears, I know not what they
mean,
Sprung from the depths of some divine
despair,'

are fraught with meaning to so many of us. I suppose that there is no heart, no life that has been always free from this bleak shadow of despair. I often think over Carlyle's words: 'When I gazed into those stars, have they not looked down upon me as with pity, like eyes glistening with heavenly tears over the little lot of man?' In these days we have seen pessimism thrown into a positive theory, formally enunciated and supported by the authority of great names. Sophocles of old showed his melancholy irony when he said that it was best of all not to be born, and next best to get quit of life as soon as we could. These famous

words of the great tragedian are the received motto of pessimism. No one can read John Stuart Mill's violent arraignment of the whole course of Nature without seeing that, on the most basal grounds, he is a pessimist. We have the semi-scientific system of Schopenhauer and Hartwig. Then Mr. Sully writes his book on pessimism, and Mr. Mallock seriously argues out the question, Is life worth the living? And then we have the greatest of Italian scholars—as a boy, he wrote Greek which judges could hardly distinguish from Anacreon's—and loftiest of modern Italian poets, Giacomo Leopardi, who has dilated on the misery and hopelessness of human life. 'Perchance Nature will have pity on us,' he writes, 'if there exists anything in heaven or earth that has pity on man.' He writes an epithalamium for his sister, but warns her that her sons must be either cowards or unfortunates. 'Choose them unhappy; between happiness and virtue there yawns an awful gulf.' He describes both his school and himself when he says: 'I like to uncover more and more the misery of mankind and of all creation, to touch it with my own hand, to be seized with a cold shudder while I examine this unhallowed and terrible secret of life.'

There is always a deep vein of sorrow and disappointment, of shadow and drawback, in every human life. One man wrote *miserrimus* on his tomb, and there are many who would not refuse that briefest, saddest, and most significant of epitaphs. Whenever I come to know people whose lot seems most enviable and brilliant, I know that it is only a matter of time, and I shall unexpectedly open some closet-door and discover a skeleton. Once I had the

privilege of knowing somewhat intimately one of the most gifted and famous Englishmen of our day. He had achieved an amount of fame and fortune far beyond his hopes. But there were black shadows which gathered around him. He seemed to despair of the prospects both of Christianity and of society. His main difficulties and unhappiness arose from his moral and intellectual speculations. It was clear that his prevailing mood was melancholy. I shall never forget the almost frightful earnestness with which he told me one day he wished he had never been born. And, indeed, this has been told me again and again by persons who, as it seemed to me, had especial reasons to be grateful for their creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life. 'And what is your drawback?' I said to a friend who had shown me over his splendid picture-gallery, and lavished princely hospitality on me. 'I have a drawback,' he answered gravely, and he told me one of the saddest stories to which I have ever listened. And now it is a constant formula of mine to inquire, if such an inquiry may be permitted, what is the shadow, the blight, the drawback, the fatal element in so many lives, if not in every human life.

That discontent which heightens and darkens every misfortune fosters pessimism and finally despair. I am afraid that there is more despair in the world than most of us think of. The morning papers have always some terrible suggestions on this head in their paragraphs. Now, of all things that can happen, despair is the direst and the very foolishhest. It is the final outcome of pessimism. 'Never despair,' said Burke; 'and if you do, work in despair.' Sometimes the theory is developed into very awful practice. It is very

curious to look at the different ways in which Greeks and Romans regarded the subject of stoicism. The Greeks argued about things, while the Romans simply did them. The Greeks argued the question generally, but the Romans opened a vein and plunged into the bath. Unfortunately there is always a heavy average of suicides: never more than in these days of unrest and excitement. Going over a large county lunatic asylum, the medical director told me that the main cause of insanity was neither love nor religion, as people might suppose, but worry about business, and money troubles. They think that they might get out of this troublesome world by the simple method of taking a few drops of prussic-acid. There was once a vulgar song, which I believe had its origin in one of the transpontine theatres:

'Prussic-acid, prussic-acid,
Down my throat I'll quickly tuck it,
For I never shall have rest
Until I have kicked the bucket.'

This world may be troublesome, but it is quite possible that there is something worse behind it. The French have a theory that death wipes away dishonour. In Dumas's *Monte Cristo*, the estimable Marseilles merchant and his son agree that, as they cannot meet their business bills, the proper thing to do is that the father should commit suicide. I do not think that this would be much consolation to the creditors. I am reminded that the worst that can happen is that a man should have to go to the workhouse. Now the workhouse is not such a very bad sort of place. There are many that are worse. I make a point of going everywhere, and among other places I have repeatedly visited a workhouse. As I have seen the old men take their cocoa

or skilly, smoke their pipes, and read the penny paper, well clothed and comfortably housed, it has occurred to me that a man might be worse off than in a workhouse. It is astonishing how cheerful people can make themselves even under the most desperate conditions. I have just been reading a book in which a gentleman, who has previously given the public an account of convict prisons, describes his earlier experiences in Whitecross-street and the Queen's Bench. Here is his description of a breakfast-party: 'Stewed kidneys, broiled bacon, boiled eggs, and kippered herrings formed the hot dishes. Knuckle of ham, the remains of a brace of grouse, and a standing Lincolnshire pork-pie were ready, cold, to support them in furnishing us with a good meal; while coffee, tea, claret, and bottled Bass afforded ample choice of fluid to wash it down.' But as a matter of fact, my dear general reader, you are not really afraid of coming to the workhouse. It is the sort of thing which you can prophesy to your son when he is going ahead with his expenditure, or tell your wife when she has got through her last cheque too quickly.

Concerning those wretched people who really do give up in despair, I have repeatedly noticed that good was on the way to them if they had only waited a little longer. Lord Lytton has pointed out that just when Chatterton destroyed himself in despair, influential people were inquiring about him, and were coming to his rescue. I saw a paragraph quite lately in the *Times* to the effect that a man had destroyed himself for fear of coming to want, and all the time a large legacy was lying ready for him. And the other day there was the case of the poor

fellow whose post-office order for fifteen shillings arrived just a post too late. So necessary is it that we should exercise patience, and never surrender the privilege of immortal hope. The poet never wrote a truer line than 'Hope springs eternal in the human breast.' It struggles through despondency like gleams of sunshine on the wild March days. There is an amiable inconsistency about those pessimists. Just as we have sometimes seen a smile lurking on a woebegone countenance, so pessimism is sometimes betrayed out of its black bile. Just so we have heard the story, whether true or not we do not profess to say, of a man who wrote a book to prove that the end of the world was come, and took a lease of his house for twenty years on the proceeds. We find even Leopardi writing in his early days: 'My wish is to soar and to become great and immortal by genius and by study—an enterprise arduous, and perhaps for me visionary; but man must not be faint-hearted nor despair of himself.' It must be acknowledged, however, that this is by no means the general tone of his writings, amidst his repellent home surroundings, and by the side of an uncongenial parent.

I have come to the commonplace, but also to the common-sense, conclusion, that, on the whole, cheerfulness is the right corner to lay hold by. 'Serve God and be cheerful,' was the motto of holy Bishop Hacket. 'Cheerfulness is a hymn of praise to God' is a true saying. 'I pray thee, dear wife, be merry in God,' wrote Sir Thomas More on the eve of his execution. I do not deny that there may be a great deal to be said both for the optimistic and the pessimistic views of things; and I suppose that

the truly philosophical thing would be to strike the balance and to steer for a *via media*. But I am conscious that I lean very decidedly to one side. I lean more to the optimist side than to the pessimist. The apex of the three-cornered view shall be crowned and happy with this idea of cheerfulness. I cannot, with the conflict and tragedy and sorrow that are around us, believe that this is really the best of all possible worlds. Yet if things are not for the best, we may yet make the best of them. I cannot sympathise with those who, if they can keep their snug homes and snug incomes, ask no other heaven. But still less can I indorse this pestilential pessimist theory. But whatever the sorrows of life, I indorse the words of our grand poetess:

'I thank Thee while my days go on,
I bless Thee while my days go on;
Through dark and dread, through fire
and frost,
With emptied arms and treasure lost,
I thank Thee while my days go on.'

The cloud may not lift from the human life, but there may be something cheerful beyond the cloud. This too was the tranquil serene philosophy of one of the profoundest of English poets—I mean Wordsworth; and I think it is a sign of good that at our universities Wordsworth is now the poet most deeply studied and keenly appreciated. He says:

'Neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish
men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith that all which we
behold
Is full of blessings.'

Yes, that is by far the wisest as well as the happiest way of looking at things. It will be found that the three-cornered theory really exhausts all the

possible philosophies of practical human life. And these theories, though coming up as new ideas and with a new terminology, are in reality as old as the hills. The optimist and the pessimist are just our old friends the laughing and the crying philosopher over again. Either character has always seemed to me a little absurd. He is cruel to laugh while 'the still small music of humanity' is in his ears. 'Respect the burden, madam,' said Napoleon to a lady who was somewhat scornful towards a poor man carrying a load uphill. We cannot indulge in the laughter of fools while we recognise everywhere 'the burden and heat of the day.' Still less can we indulge in idle tears when we recognise the glories of the hopes for the race and for the individuals. You must needs philoso-

phise, my brother, and you had better get hold of the right corner in your philosophy. Play with your children and make love to your wife. Remember Lord Melbourne's advice to a dullard friend, as they were returning late home through the streets, that he might at least have amused himself by seeing the light flashed from the backs of the lobsters in the fishmongers' shops. Learn that in all Nature, from the star to the stone, there is instruction. Keep both your conscience and your digestion in thoroughly good order. Be hopeful; make allowances; put yourself in other people's places; avoid both the stoical and epicurean extremes; be neither sinner nor Pharisee, and you have secured the safest and pleasantest prong of our three-horned dilemma.



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people most of them, were so much in the habit of thinking their own concerns and the concerns of their neighbours affairs of paramount importance, that, if a great European war had broken out, they would not have considered it of one half so much importance as the burning of Farmer Beanstalk's ricks, or the defalcations of the local tax-gatherer. The death of the parish-clerk produced a more profound impression amongst all ranks and classes than that of the Emperor Napoleon; and the Crimean war was only thought worthy of a place in the annals of Southbay because one of the Squire's sons happened to be killed before Sebastopol.

'There is a marble in the church about it,' said Southbay; and so summed up the campaign.

Never was there so self-contained a little town. In the season visitors came and went, took lodgings, paid sufficient sums of money to landladies and tradespeople; but Southbay took no notice of them, beyond putting down everything they required, in the way of eating, drinking, and clothing, at about double its worth, in their bills.

Southbay did nothing for the amusement of its guests. It had no bands, no regattas, no flower-shows, no promenades; it would not have even a barrel-organ, or a monkey clad in Highland costume, appear in its streets.

To visitors Southbay was austere, not to say repellent. Their money was acceptable, but themselves—no. Southbay did not like its sands to be dug over by strange children; it grudged the shells that infant hands bore triumphantly inland. It had a general idea that there must be something wrong about the homes of persons who left them each year to the mercy of charwomen and servants; and it viewed

with distinct disfavour the dresses of those ladies who thought to pleasure Southbay and themselves by donning all their bravery, and appearing in church arrayed in silk attire, made in the very latest fashion. The wars of politicians, the intrigues of statesmen, the triumphs achieved by art, the discoveries made by explorers,—all these things, which Southbay read about in its local papers, were merely regarded as parts of a play enacted for the pleasure of the little town.

If business or expediency took any of the Southbairns up to London, themselves and all their neighbours imagined London must be excited by the circumstance. That London was able to get on without people from Southbay the inhabitants understood, after a fashion, just as they understood Jura and the Rhigi still remained standing, even though no tourist from amongst them chanced to be in Switzerland; but they felt the mountains, during such absence, must be lonely; and in like manner they had a conviction—none the less certain because silent—that without visitors from Southbay London must seem empty. The sense of personal importance was upon every one in Southbay; less because of that importance of individuality, which characterises even a gutter child, but because he or she belonged to Southbay.

It was something to have been born there, and to have had many ancestors born there likewise, for many previous generations; but it was also something to be taken up by Southbay, figuratively given the freedom of that historical town, admitted to the ranks of fellowship, and treated almost upon an equality with those who had 'lived there all their lives.'

This was a work of time. Not rashly did Southbay vouchsafe other than a cold welcome to those

who bought properties or took long leases of houses in its midst. Southbay said, and said rightly, that it knew nothing about strangers; and so it was tacitly understood that strangers were there to be treated as the English law practically treats those it is supposed to consider innocent—as most pestilent criminals.

When a new man came to the pretty watering-place, there was no story concerning him that might not have hoped to gain credence.

If Southbay had heard he was a bigamist, a forger, a swindler, Southbay would have said, 'Just what I always thought about him.'

As for birth, no man could be well born who had not Southbay blood in his veins. Over tea- and supper-tables genealogies were recited that would have astonished Sir Bernard Burke. Good old family-trees, growing in other pastures, were pronounced mushrooms. There was always some ancient dame, or shaky old gentleman, who knew stories to the disparagement of Lord A.'s grandfather, or the Marchioness of B.'s mamma.

Voices were dropped and heads shaken, and such utterances as, 'I could tell a tale about that family;' or, 'There were good reasons why the last earl did not marry, only the less said concerning such matters the better; though it was stated on the best authority that the scandal concerning Lady ——' and so forth,—all of which remarks were as so much wine to the inhabitants of Southbay, making glad their hearts within them, and showing more conclusively than the parson ever did, how dreadfully wicked the world was—that world from which, each Sunday audibly, and on most weekdays in its heart, Southbay prayed to be delivered.

For the world to Southbay seemed a very tangible thing. It meant all creation outside its own

little circle—London, St. Petersburg, New York, and many other places mentioned in the geography-book.

The feeling which induced the Shetland minister to pray for his own country, and the 'adjacent islands' of Great Britain and Ireland, was rampant at Southbay. It was an ignorant little place—a hundred, two hundred, three hundred years behind the rest of the world in mental civilisation; just tolerating new curates, treating doctors who took care of a practice as if they belonged to some strange and far-away order of creation; taking unkindly to wives introduced from a distance, and refusing altogether to believe in husbands from remote counties—say Middlesex, or Surrey, or Hertfordshire, or any other shire beyond the pale of that which boasted the fee-simple of Southbay.

For these and many other reasons, Southbay had failed to greet with effusion the new agent who came to rule over the great Forrest estates. For some motive unintelligible to outsiders, local wisdom decided Mr. Albyn, the son of the late agent, ought to have stepped into his father's shoes. That Mr. Albyn disliked country life, and was making a far greater success in London as a barrister than he could ever have hoped to do at Southbay, even as Mr. Forrest's representative, modified their opinion not in the least. Southbay had known him as a boy, and Southbay felt it could know him as a man.

On the contrary, the new agent was a total stranger to all the men, women, and children in the town. No one knew anything about him or his wife. He declined to live in the house Mr. Albyn had inhabited—a great staring square stone house on the eastern road, commanding an un-

interrupted view of shingle and of restless sea, and instead 'took himself off,' as Southbay indignantly expressed itself, to a 'trump-ery cottage' on the way to South-cliffe—a cottage which it was an insult put upon the Forrest property for Mr. Forrest's agent to live in.

'But what can be expected when a landlord deliberately builds himself a residence in a strange county, and actually talks of letting off some of his land, so that speculators may come and run up dreadful villa residences, and spoil the whole neighbourhood?'

That was what Southbay asked; and as somehow the new agent seemed to be an instrument in the hands of the infatuated landlord, it was not likely he, a stranger, an alien, an innovator, would be regarded with much favour.

Once for all it may be said the dreaded change has been wrought.

Southbay is not now a pretty little town, nestling down on the sea-shore under the shelter of soft green hills.

Capitalists, speculative builders, Conservative, Liberal, Independent, and Progress Societies have found out the place and changed the very face of Nature itself.

No transformation-scene was ever more complete. Where broom waved and gorse grew there are public baths and lecture-rooms and a bazaar and a riding-school. Mr. Albyn's old house has been altered into an hotel, and just beyond it a pier has been thrown out, where steamers stop and bring hosts of visitors to this 'favourite watering-place,' *vide* the guide-book to Southbay. Two lines of railway have tunnelled under the hills, and come out of darksome caverns into their respective stations. New people jostle the old inhabitants, and a fresh cemetery has been started, to

say nothing of waterworks, gas-works, and a brewery.

There has been even a talk of trying the electric light along the 'Old Parade;' but Southbay—the original Southbay—does not care. Its cup has long been full—electric or any other lights cannot matter to it now.

When the prospectus of the Pier Hotel Company (Limited) was issued, with Mr. John Albyn's name as one of the directors, Southbay figuratively turned its face to the wall, and gave up the ghost.

CHAPTER II.

A BROILING afternoon in the latter part of July—not a breath of wind stirring, the sea lying blue and still under the summer sun.

The clanging of church-bells; the voices of many children; wreaths and garlands hung about the houses and suspended across the street; one house, of no pretensions and of mean aspect, more decorated than all the others; a certain appearance of deadly liveliness about the town; the fact of all the inhabitants being dressed in gala or Sunday costume,—denoted that an uncommon event was stirring the sluggish pulse of Southbay.

Round and about the Forrest Arms a grateful smell of something very savoury pervaded the air. There was to be a dinner at that ancient hostelry, recently rechristened, in a few hours' time. It was quite a holiday. There had been service in the battered church with the old stone tower, where the bells were now pealing, and luncheon-parties given at the houses of several of the gentry. Maidservants wore wedding-favours, and all the Forrest tenantry had similar decorations. The

proudest people relaxed, and had some pleasant word to say to their humbler neighbours; whilst the poor would have been jubilant, save that their joy was tempered by an uncertainty as to whether the hundred pounds sent down by Mr. Forrest for their behoof was to be given to them in goods or money.

If in money— But, however, that has nothing to do with this story.

Walking up the shady side of the High-street, Mr. Forde, the rector, encountered his parishioner Miss Le Deene walking in the shade likewise, but in the opposite direction.

‘Whither away?’ asked the clergyman, with that genial smile and gracious affability of manner which at a very early period of his rectorship had disarmed the antagonism and thawed the ice of Southbay.

‘You will laugh when I tell you,’ answered the lady thus addressed. ‘Meeting neither husband nor wife here, I had a fancy to walk over to Southcliffe.’

‘Indeed!’ said the rector thoughtfully.

‘It is strange that Mr. Forrest’s agent should absent himself on the occasion of Mr. Forrest’s wedding,’ continued Miss Le Deene.

‘He is to be at the dinner this evening,’ remarked the rector.

‘Have you ever seen him?’ asked the lady.

‘Never,’ was the reply. ‘When I called he was out, and you know they do not come to church at Southbay.’

‘I know,’ groaned Miss Le Deene.

‘Have you ever seen him?’ asked Mr. Forde, retorting the lady’s question of a moment before.

‘No,’ she said, ‘but I have seen her, and, simply and truly, she is the loveliest creature I ever beheld.’

‘Really?’

‘Really, Mr. Forde. I am but a woman, and do not profess to be a connoisseur of such matters; but I have been here and there and everywhere, and in my time seen many beautiful faces, but not one like hers.’

‘Indeed!’ said the clergyman again. ‘You have excited my curiosity. I must call again, and try to see her.’

‘She is not difficult of access,’ answered Miss Le Deene, ‘and if she is at home when you call she is sure to see you. She is not handsome, but she is lovely—though Southbay won’t take to her; just the very sweetest woman you ever met.’

And with that parting statement, which indeed might have been considered a slap in the face of Mrs. Rector, Miss Le Deene shook hands with her spiritual adviser, and walked solitary up the hillside and over the cliffs.

A tall angular woman, who followed no fashion and adopted no party. Who, living in Southbay, contemned Southbay. Who, born in Southbay, was not quite of Southbay. Who had brought ways and thoughts into Southbay that Southbay deemed were foreign to its nature; and yet who, for all her travelling and reading and mixing with society, was as true and typical a Southbaian as any who had lived in the place from birth to burial.

The daughter of a bishop, the granddaughter of a judge—the judge born in Southbay, the bishop born in Southbay too (the little place had sent out many a noted man)—she returned after a long time, to cast in her lot with the descendants of her progenitors, and elected to do several things which the Southbaians viewed with suspicion.

Unto herself she was a rule, and

unto her she permitted no man or woman to dictate.

She had tried various places of residence and various ways of life; but after all—after the ups and downs, the ins and outs—she came back to Southbay, as people whose position elsewhere was most uncertain had a habit of doing.

In Southbay she was to a certain extent a power. Southbay said, 'Miss Le Deene had her notions about things,' or her 'special whims;' but Southbay did not controvert her notions or contradict her whims. No; not even when she visited the Arkleys, who had not responded to the patronage of Southbay.

That genial town only remarked, 'Miss Le Deene perhaps is right; at all events she can do what we cannot.'

Therefore Southbay, when once it found Mrs. Arkley from home, was content so to leave her, while Mrs. Arkley seemed more than content so to be left.

But Miss Le Deene was not content so to be left. She had taken a fancy to Mrs. Arkley. Whether her husband were king or kaiser, whether she had sprung from the people or were a scion of some ancient stock, signified not a pin to the bishop's daughter. That lady understood at first sight the wife of the new agent was a gentlewoman, and the loveliest woman she had ever beheld.

She was not handsome, or beautiful, or pretty. No sculptor would have craved to chisel her features. No artist would have entreated to portray a perfect face.

She had no beauty of the devil, wherewith to craze the pen of a certain order of modern novelists, but she was lovely—simply, wholly, entirely.

When you looked at her you could wish nothing more, you could suggest nothing less. You never

paused to think whether her features were regular, her hair the rarest shade of brown, her figure of the best proportions; but when you saw her smile, heard her voice, felt the warm clasp of her hand, you knew it was just fair, honest, pure Susan Arkley, and thought her, with Miss Le Deene, a most lovely and perfect creature.

As her visitor drew near she was standing under a great beech-tree that grew in front of the cottage, with her year-old baby in her arms—a fair picture.

How tall? you ask. Well, that was one of the questions no one who ever saw her thought of asking; but she scarcely reached the middle height; a slight graceful creature, hair of the warmest shade of brown, red almost when she was a toddling little mite, but which had mellowed into the brightest, sunniest, richest brown imaginable.

There was a little wave in it too, such as is to be found often in such hair, and it was drawn back from her forehead and rippled in soft curves above her ears, and was drawn together behind in a knot.

Hers was the clear creamy skin which accompanies such hair, and she had the tender hazel eyes, shaded by long black lashes, sometimes wanting in that conjunction.

Sweetest eyes, innocent as a child's, and yet earnest with all a woman's depth of tenderness; eyes that could answer to another's mood, smile back smiles, melt into pity, weep tears of sympathy, look steadfastly out on life; eyes a man might well love to see in the face of his wife, his daughter, or his mother; and that if once you had beheld shining at you with the glamour of love or friendship, you would forget never again till all love and all friendship were forgotten too.

For the rest, what was there? A calm white brow; cheeks never brilliant with colour, save when emotion tinted or excitement flushed them. If you had taken the delicate leaf of a blush rose and laid it against her cheek, the colour faintly mantling there would scarcely have outvied it. Her nose was small and straight, but belonged to no recognised order; and her mouth was frank, sweet, gracious.

If there were a firmness about the lower part of her face which spoke of a strength her eyes seemed to belie, it was softened down by the tenderness of her expression, shaded off by the lovely curve of her lips, and the sweet dimples lying in transparent hiding for the first smile to discover and reveal.

A girl almost in appearance, and yet a woman who had left her teens behind her one summer birthday some six years ago.

'I am all alone,' she said, gaily coming forward over the green-sward to meet Miss Le Deene—'all alone, except baby and Betty. Every one else is off to see the show; baby is too young and Betty too old to care for such vanities.'

'But you, Mrs. Arkley—I was perfectly amazed not to meet you to-day. Without offence, I suppose I may say you are not too young—as you certainly are not too old—to enjoy a gala-day.'

Mrs. Arkley laughed as, with the gesture of one well accustomed to such pastime, she tossed up baby and held him high in the air, she looking at him with merry upturned face, he crowing in the intensity of his delight.

'Forgive me,' she said the next moment, with a deprecating smile, perceiving that Miss Le Deene failed to see how she had originated any amusing idea. 'I could not help laughing at your notion that I was likely to be attracted

by *fêtes* and festivals. These are for other folks—are not they, boy darling? The fact is I have seen so many shows that I do not think I should fret if I never saw another. One evening I came home from a great party, and took off my finery, glass slippers and all, and do not feel as if I should ever care to walk into fairyland again, unless—unless an impossibility came to pass.'

'Were you so unhappy at that—that great party you speak of?' asked Miss Le Deene.

'Unhappy!' cried Mrs. Arkley. 'O, dear, no! It was fairyland I passed through that day, and I found an enchanted prince there. I suppose it is the bells—the influence of the wedding—memory—something which makes me talk in this light-minded way. Pray come in—you must be so tired—and have some tea. Betty is making it.'

'Shall I not have the pleasure of seeing your husband?' asked Miss Le Deene, passing through a window opening to the ground, and wreathed in a green frame of tangled clematis and passion-flower and roses.

'I am afraid not,' Mrs. Arkley answered; but her tone was slower and her voice graver now, her visitor noticed. 'He must go down to the tenants' dinner, and I scarcely think he will come back home first.'

'Ahem! Something wrong here,' decided Miss Le Deene. 'My lady's pretty tongue does not wag so fast or so glibly when she speaks of the real lord and master as it did when she talked of the fairy prince. That is why she does not care for shows, and why festivals and feasts are alike uninviting.'

'Is your husband very shy, Mrs. Arkley?' asked the judge's granddaughter blandly and insinuatingly, as that functionary might have

put a similar question from the bench.

'No, he is not shy,' answered Mrs. Arkley, but she said the words thoughtfully, and half hid her face in baby's neck.

'Perhaps he is very proud?' suggested Miss Le Deene, with a lightsome smile, intended to conceal the real artfulness of the inquiry.

'No, certainly not proud,' said the young wife dreamily, 'though if any one ever had cause to be proud it is he;' and as she spoke a soft light came into her eyes, like a sweet effect of tearful sunshine.

'I have heard,' remarked Miss Le Deene—'a little bird whispered the story about Southbay—that Captain Arkley has greatly distinguished himself.'

Mrs. Arkley smiled.

'O, yes, indeed! More, far more than that; but he does not like me to speak about it. He won't talk of such things himself, or allow me to talk of them either.'

'One can see who is master here,' considered Miss Le Deene, who, unlike Sarah, had never called any man lord, with amazement, and who could not avoid feeling a pitying contempt for a woman who even professed to obey her husband; but she only said aloud, 'The Victoria Cross was conferred upon him, was it not?'

'Yes,' answered Mrs. Arkley, with a wistful far-away look and a repressed sigh.

She was thinking, poor soul, it might sometimes be a decoration dearly bought, and that, reversing the usual order of things, not even such a crown could lighten the burden of a life-long cross.

At that moment a servant came in with tea. Never did interruption seem more welcome.

'Take baby,' said the mother, and her voice was full of unshed

tears, 'and put him to sleep, please, Betty. Our little household seems quite demoralised to-day, Miss Le Deene; but then we have not a Mr. Forrest married every week.'

'Do you know him personally?' asked Miss Le Deene.

'Intimately. He has been a dear friend of ours for years past.'

'Indeed!' commented Miss Le Deene, feeling puzzled by the statement.

Though Mr. Forrest's father had risen 'quite from the people,' so the Southbay babble had it, still he had risen from the people of Southbay; and, spite of the fact that scarcely any one in the town was acquainted with him even by sight, the individual who possessed all the great Forrest properties, all the shore rights and mineral rights, and Heaven only knew how many other rights besides, seemed a great man even in the eyes of the bishop's daughter.

Miss Le Deene sipped her tea in silence. There was a certain dreaminess about the atmosphere of the pretty drawing-room, and Miss Le Deene felt meditative. She did not understand the Arkleys; did not comprehend any one electing to live in a lonely cottage when a good house in Southbay was to be had for a song; could not see why Mr. and Mrs. Arkley persisted in refusing the invitations sent them for tea, dinner, a little evening; why Mrs. Arkley was seen so rarely in Southbay, and Captain Arkley, as one might say, never. Two whole months at Southcliffe, and stranger to Southbay than though they had lived hundreds of miles away, toiling across the hills to Southchurch, and keeping themselves aloof, as if he were a duke and she a duchess.

Indeed, the Duchess of Landless had behaved herself very differently while taking the air and sea-

baths at Southbay. Once, when overtaken by a thunderstorm, she sought refuge in widow Harting's cottage, where she seated herself quite affably, and gave the widow's little granddaughter a threepenny-piece when the shower passed over.

Miss Le Deene had heard some rumour of a severe wound Captain Arkley received when fighting; who was it amongst—the Chinese, or the South Sea Islanders, or the Tartars, or any other people? It did not much signify to Southbay where the soldiers of England had fought or were fighting. At all events, she knew tidings to that effect had reached the little town. Perhaps it had touched his head or spoiled his temper.

A certain admiral of her acquaintance, who returned home short of a leg, grew simply unbearable while the wind was in the east; while she remembered a Waterloo veteran, of whom his relations said, whenever his over-night potations had been too deep and too strong, he always declared, 'That bullet is troubling me again.'

Perhaps Captain Arkley grew at times unbearable; perhaps, indeed, he was always unbearable, and preferred his own temper to any other society. Miss Le Deene had met with two or three eccentric people, who, though sound of limb and harbouring no bullets, had preferred their personal company to the best which could be offered them.

Poverty did not cause the Arkleys to live away at such an out-of-the-way spot as Southcliffe; of that Miss Le Deene felt perfectly satisfied. The interior of the cottage was furnished in the most expensive manner: nothing in the way of comfort or luxury, for which the modest rooms afforded space, was absent. Rich hangings, rare china, exquisite pictures, a magnificent

piano; a thousand little nick-nacks that must—so she silently appraised their value—have cost a small fortune.

The tea-service in its way was daintily elegant; 'and every thread'—I quote Miss Le Deene's statement verbatim, as made to her cronies afterwards—'of Master Son and Heir's dress would bear the closest inspection.'

As for flowers, 'the place,' said Miss Le Deene, 'is like a horticultural show—banks of them, inside and out; a perfect waste of money, I call it; and on the top of Southcliffe, too, where there is not a creature but themselves to see the exhibition. But she is the fairest flower of them all; and I do say it is a thousand pities her friends let her marry him, that I do.'

And whatever might be thought of the latter part of Miss Le Deene's sentence, there could be no question but that, as has been said before, Mrs. Arkley was as sweet a flower as a man need desire to see in town or country, in crowded rooms amongst others rare and lovely, or blooming in sweet simplicity on the lonely mountain-side.

While her visitor was exercising her astute mind in wandering over all likely possibilities, threading her devious way through pros and cons innumerable, Mrs. Arkley's thoughts had also been upon a journey. Backwards and forwards they had strayed, now over the past, again looking hopefully into the future, finally reverting to the present; and, when they did so, she found that a few minutes' silence, which appeared as she woke from her reverie to have lasted much longer than was really the case, had fallen upon herself and her visitor, whose eyes, with no hint of speculation in them, were now fastened on the blue sea, which she

beheld through a tracery of leaves glittering in the distance.

On the air there came frequent whiffs from the hedge of sweet-brier that bounded one portion of the lawn. The scent was not constantly perceptible, but at intervals it wandered into the room, for a moment putting out of court the fragrance of roses and the odour of lilies.

Ever after, even in the dead winter-time of the year, when Miss Le Deene thought of Mrs. Arkley—which was often—the vision of that charming lady appeared surrounded by a wealth of flowers, while across the waters of memory there stole subtly and gently the perfume of sweetbrier borne on the breath of a faint west wind.

Who amongst us has not some association of the kind? Heaven grant, friends, that yours may be as pure and pleasant as that which brought the memory of Mrs. Arkley wafted to the heart of a rugged-looking elderly lady!

'You must excuse my preoccupation,' said Mrs. Arkley, blushing a little, as if she alone had been engrossed in thought; 'but I began marvelling why you asked if my husband were proud; was it'—she put the question with a slight hesitancy, and yet archly too—'because we were not present at my sister's wedding?'

'Good gracious, no!' answered Miss Le Deene, in blunt astonishment, putting down her cup that she might stare the better at Mrs. Arkley. 'Till this moment I was not even aware you had a sister.'

'Not aware I had a sister?' repeated Mrs. Arkley, laughing outright.

'No; how should I know anything about her? Now that I do know I congratulate you on the occasion of her marriage, if it be a matter meet for congratulation.

I hope she has made what the world calls a good match?'

'I call it a good match in every respect,' answered Mrs. Arkley, the dimples in her face rippling over with fun.

'But I daresay you are romantic. I should not like to take your opinion exactly on a question of this kind. Is the gentleman—has he, in a word, plenty of money?'

'Well, yes,' was the reply. 'He is young, rich, handsome, kind, generous, considerate.'

'A goodly list of virtues,' remarked Miss Le Deene.

'And his name is Forrest,' added Mrs. Arkley slyly.

'No! you cannot mean that—not our Mr. Forrest! I believe, you wicked creature, you have been making fun of me all this time. I almost doubt whether you possess a sister.'

'Indeed I do—three of them.'

'And one is really married to a gentleman named Forrest?'

'To our Mr. Forrest, as you call him.'

'But, my dear, how can that be? Mr. Forrest is only married to-day, and to a daughter of the Reverend Sir Hubert Yarrell.'

'To Milly; yes, my dear sister. I thought all Southbay knew that.'

If Miss Le Deene had spoken her mind, she would have answered that all Southbay should know it before she slept; but she refrained from that utterance, and tried to conceal the depth of the conversational abyss into which she felt she had descended by talking loquaciously concerning the would-be wisdom of Southbay on matters which did not concern its interests in the least, and its inconceivable ignorance on points that were really important to it; by laughing at the dense stupidity of the little town, and her own stupidity as an inhabitant; telling Mrs. Arkley she was a sly puss, though

she looked as innocent as her own baby; winding up by an assurance that the first time she saw Captain Arkley she would complain of having been so mystified and perplexed by his pretty wife as never a sober spinster was mystified and perplexed before.

And so covering what she felt had been a social defeat—a complete rout from a stranger she had rather intended to patronise with a bold front and an abundance of badinage—Miss Le Deene took her leave and wended her way back to Southbay, marvelling greatly as she walked along.

Just before she reached the Parade she met that Mr. Albyn who ought, Southbay had decided, to have been agent instead of Mr. Arkley. He was a clever young man, possessed of manners even more decided than those which rendered Miss Le Deene remarkable, and given to a directness of speech which stood him perhaps in better stead in the London courts than in the drawing-rooms of his native Southbay.

He did not come often to Southbay now, and it was a long time—nearly twelve months—since Miss Le Deene had seen him.

‘Going to the dinner?’ he asked, when the first salutations were over.

‘Are you?’ said Miss Le Deene, who was impervious to his raillery.

‘Yes,’ he answered, ‘I intend doing so presently; and you—’

‘Have been drinking tea with the agent’s wife.’

‘Did you see the agent?’

‘No; and I do so want to see him, for I fancy there must be something odd about him.’

‘Your fancy has as usual served its mistress faithfully,’ remarked Mr. Albyn.

‘What is it that is wrong?’ asked the lady eagerly. ‘None of us have ever been able to know

what to make of them since they took up their quarters at Southcliffe.’

‘And what did you make of them over the dish of tea?’ suggested the young man as a leader.

‘Well, I am quite as much in the dark as ever. I do not think Mrs. Arkley’s could have been a love match, for her face clouds whenever her husband is mentioned; and though she spoke quite pleasantly about her sister’s marriage, still you must remember they were not at the wedding, and I concluded she felt the difference between her own position as wife to a mere agent, when contrasted with the much more suitable alliance Miss Millicent Yarrell has contracted.’

‘And you think she wishes she had done as well?’

‘I do, naturally.’

Hearing this, Mr. Albyn burst into what Miss Le Deene in her precise moments called ‘one of his great horse-laughs.’

‘That is too good!’ he exclaimed. ‘I beg your pardon, but I cannot help laughing. Why, Forrest wanted to marry Mrs. Arkley herself. He followed her about like her shadow; and it is said she actually accepted him about a quarter of an hour before she met her present husband just back from the wars. She married Captain Arkley against the wishes of all her people, for Sir Hubert counts as a mere nobody; and the loving pair would not have had a shilling upon which to start housekeeping if it had not been for Forrest. And now I must say good-bye, Miss Le Deene.’

And so likewise we must say good-bye to Miss Le Deene, and go back more than a dozen years, into the ‘sixties.

CHAPTER III.

IN the 'sixties, then, there lived in the flattest, breeziest, and healthiest part of the healthy county of Norfolk a certain clergyman named Yarrell.

He was Vicar of Bersey, a remarkably poor living, and, except in the matter of children, he could not be considered richly endowed.

Well born, well bred, well educated; it might have been thought that he had many chances in his favour, and that it was not impossible he might yet achieve great things; but the only member of his house who had ever held out a helping hand was dead; his breeding was of that prepossessing but not very serviceable description which shrinks from contact with those who might possibly prove of benefit; his education he used in a manner only calculated to make him a bookworm; and so at eight-and-forty he found himself, as regards fortune, just so much worse than when he was ordained deacon that he had aged a quarter of a century, and was saddled, moreover, with five serious responsibilities in the persons of a wife and four daughters.

Sons had been given to him, but they were dead: opportunities had presented themselves, but he was not the man to avail himself of them. The list of authors with whose works he was intimately acquainted could not be considered other than appalling, but no writer amongst them had been able to teach him how to compose a really fine sermon.

Even if he had managed to do so, it would not have been much appreciated by the members of his congregation. Better for him at Bersey to have known something about sheep and roots, and the points of a good milch-cow, and so win his way to intimacy with his

people, than to excel in oratory. But Mr. Yarrell, though unblessed with genius, was not blessed with common sense. If ever a man were made a butt for the irony of fortune, he was the man. If ever a round peg found itself dropped into a square hole, he was the peg. Of rural affairs he knew even less than he did of courts. With the tillers of the soil, and with the men who looked to their labourers and their wheat-fields to provide bread for their families, the where-withal to satisfy their landlords' requirements, he had as much understanding sympathy as with a Chinese. In return his people did not in the least understand him.

That they liked and respected him, and in a vague way were proud of a parson who could read all the books ranged round the walls of his study, arose more perhaps from instinct than from reason.

Mr. Yarrell was a Christian and a gentleman, and if he buried his talent, and rendered both qualities as useless as such qualities ever can be made, it was more his misfortune than his fault.

Such men generally marry young a wife destitute of fortune. Mr. Yarrell married young a lady who would have brought a better dowry to him had she come with an empty hand.

As matters were, she had a *dot* of three thousand pounds, which was so invested and tied up that it brought in under a hundred a year; but if it had yielded a revenue of thirty thousand, it could not have proved a source of greater annoyance to Mr. Yarrell.

College debts, an unlucky signature—a mere matter of form to oblige a friend—expenses incurred at first entering the Church, an easy temperament, and a generous heart, had swallowed up the small

fortune which his father, a younger son, left to him at his death.

The living of Bersey was, as I have said, poor. Year by year Mr. Yarrell failed to make his outgoings balance his incomings. He had no personal extravagances; he was content to sit down to cold mutton, or to no mutton at all; but Mrs. Yarrell thought the ninety odd pounds a year she possessed warranted a certain expenditure which might not have been necessary had Mr. Yarrell married 'a wife without a sixpence;' and consequently the vicar had, when debts accumulated, to make an effort and ask assistance from his grandfather.

So long as his grandfather lived the periodical famine at Bersey Vicarage was relieved, not in any generous or agreeable manner perhaps, but still relieved.

Sir Bolton Yarrell did not give a penny more than he was asked—very often indeed not so much as he was asked; and though he might have procured his grandson a better and more congenial living, he never made the least effort to do so. But still, to a certain extent, he did help, and it was only when he died that the actual bitterness of insufficient means began to make itself felt at Bersey Vicarage.

In due time there came the accustomed difficulty, and when it had lasted for a longer period than usual, Mr. Yarrell, though his pride winced during the operation, asked the new baronet, his cousin, for help.

Which was refused as curtly and discourteously as can well be imagined.

The latest owner had always been jealous of the favour shown to Mr. Yarrell, slight though the evidences of that favour were, and he told the clergyman in so many words he did not intend to admit the claims of relationship, or to

burden himself with the maintenance of any of his kindred.

It was a merciful letter, inasmuch as it was perfectly straightforward and conclusive. The writer encouraged no false hopes, and expressed no sympathy with misfortune, deserved or undeserved. 'I have my wife and family to see to,' he concluded; 'and having been kept out of the property for an unreasonable period, I must now try to make the best I can of it.'

He was right enough, no doubt, according to his light. If the old baronet had lived another year he would have been a century old; and the new baronet was not a young man; so, as he said, it behoved him to make the best use of his time.

Though a title may run in a family, old age can scarcely be expected to do so likewise.

On a certain spring morning in the 'sixties, then, things were, in spite of a glorious sunrising, looking very black indeed at Bersey Vicarage.

Susie, the eldest daughter, a girl in age, a child in manner, a woman in mind, acknowledged this fact with a sigh as she laid her father's letters on her father's study-table, and saw that there were even more than the usual number of suspicious-looking envelopes amongst them.

Susie, though still in her teens, was in that family a very tower of strength. If she had been a man she would have gone out and fought lions; she would have striven to slay Goliaths. She was strong in her love, her loyalty, and her tenderness, and it almost broke her young heart to see the gray hairs in her father's head, and to notice how he was getting to stoop, also how much meeker than ever the dear face was growing.

When the trouble and the trial

seemed more than she could bear, she was wont to run out into the vicarage garden, and, burying her face against the soft turf growing at the root of some old tree, sob,

'O papa! my own dear, dear, sweet papa!'

Mrs. Yarrell met her trials differently. She breakfasted in bed, and lay on the sofa most part of the day. Each of us has his or her peculiar way of encountering misfortune, and Mrs. Yarrell generally got the best of hers by maintaining, as far as the outside world was concerned, a masterly inactivity.

Things had arrived at a very bad pass indeed on that especial spring morning; they were so bad Susie could not even cry about them. Her tears seemed dried up, and with reason, perhaps, for the dignity of existence was beginning to oppress her. She was old enough now to suffer the keenest pang a girl's heart can know. News had come that week of the success of our arms in Abyssinia, and to her that the man she had loved all her young life—ever since she could remember anything—loved as boy, stripling, soldier, was badly, though not mortally, wounded.

That morning the perfume of the flowers was not grateful to her, or the gladsome sunshine pleasant. Across the house there seemed to lie the shadow of impending ruin; the very songs of the birds sounded to her shrill and discordant.

She was not thinking about aught, save her father and her lover. She had not a memory to spare for poetry; and yet deep in her heart there lay the same feeling which must have stirred Burns's very soul when he said:

'How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae weary, fu' o' care?'

Mr. Yarrell came into the pleasant breakfast-parlour, where his

four daughters, their one strong willing maid-of-all-work, the handy man who fed the pigs and the poultry, cleaned the knives and boots, attended to the kitchen-garden, and performed all sorts of incongruous labours, were assembled for prayers. The clergyman had read his letters, evidently, for Susie noticed how pale and unnerved he looked, how his hands trembled as he opened the Bible, how weak and shaken his voice sounded, except when by an effort he steadied its accents.

'What is it, dear papa?' she whispered when the little congregation arose, and she was taking the books from the table. 'Something dreadful, I am afraid.'

'I have had a letter that has shocked me terribly, my child,' he answered. 'Nothing about Tom,' he added hastily, 'and nothing about money matters. I cannot talk concerning it yet.'

And contrary to his wont, he took up the newspaper and affected to read, though Susie noticed that he never moved the sheet, and that he seemed scarcely conscious of the printed lines before him.

Susan and Milly looked at each other apprehensively. Milly was five years younger than her sister, two sons having been born between them; but she was quite old enough to understand the family troubles, and to marvel what fresh misfortune could have occurred that had nothing to do with money matters or Tom.

Tom was the only variation in the shape of trouble that Milly's experience could remember.

They had not finished breakfast—Susie, indeed, had only just come down-stairs after taking up her mother's second cup of tea—when a loud and demonstrative double knock resounded through the quiet house.

'That is Mr. Marlees,' said

Susie, turning apprehensively to her father. 'Shall I see him, as you do not seem very well?'

Mr. Yarrell hesitated; a quick sensitive colour fled over his face and then vanished, leaving it paler than before. Clearly a man not fitted to cope with adversity, to whom the strong boisterous world might well have afforded to be generous.

Mr. Marlees was a solicitor in good practice in the neighbouring town, distant some four miles from Bersey village.

He professed, and perhaps his profession was true, that though in the course of his business it often fell to his lot to press Mr. Yarrell for money, he desired to stand his friend; and he had accordingly called so often during so many years to try to 'arrange matters,' that his knock was as well known as that of the postman, and his visits as much dreaded as those of the plague.

All this time Margaret in the kitchen was washing her hands and rolling down her sleeves and tying on a clean apron preparatory to opening the door, and Mr. Yarrell in the parlour was nervously walking from open window to fern-filled fireplace, and at last saying,

'I wish you would, Susie; and, wait a moment, dear; tell him I must go to London this evening, and that I'll call upon him about—'

Margaret having opened the door at that instant, Mr. Marlees' voice rang through the hall, and involuntarily Mr. Yarrell ceased speaking.

'I won't detain your master one moment, my girl,' were the first words Susie heard spoken. 'Not finished breakfast? That is capital. I will announce myself, thank you.' And before Susan could reach the door he was in the room.

Passing Miss Yarrell by, but doing so with an apologetic smile

and confiding glance, Mr. Marlees advanced towards the vicar.

'I fear I am intruding, Sir Hubert, but I really could not resist the temptation of being the first to offer my congratulations. I trust every happiness may now attend you. The past has been bitter; even mine may have been a hated presence here often, though Heaven knows it has always been my endeavour to pour oil on the waters. Miss Yarrell, you look astonished. Is it possible, is it credible, then, I am the bearer of this good news?'

'Not good news, Mr. Marlees,' said the vicar gently; 'most sad and terrible: such a fearful death! Not a moment for—for— It has unnerved me,' he added, turning aside. 'I have not as yet mentioned the matter even to my wife.'

'God bless me!' exclaimed Mr. Marlees. 'Of course it was very terrible, and so forth—sudden, as you say; but we must all die some time, and it is to be hoped he was duly prepared.'

'Do you mean that Sir Henry is dead?' interposed Susan, in a gradual crescendo.

'Yes, my dear young lady. Killed in a moment—railway accident; lived an hour, but never spoke after the collision; his boy was dead when found.'

'O papa, papa!' cried Susan, flinging herself into her father's arms, the tears streaming down her cheeks. 'O poor Sir Henry and the little boy and his widow!'

'Queer family,' remarked Mr. Marlees, when he was recounting the above particulars during the course of the day. 'I went there expecting to find them jumping for joy all over the parish, and I give you my word, sir, the father and daughter took on as if they were broken-hearted. If I did not know them to be genuine—if I was not as sure they are sound at the core

as that I am standing here—I'd have said they were shamming, by Jove I should! But not a bit of it. Sorry for the dead man, who would have seen the vicar die of starvation before he'd have sent him a five-pound note; sorry for the boy, who stood between them and twelve thousand a year; sorry for the widow, who was never, I'll be bound, sorry for them; and sorry, I daresay, if the truth were known, they will for the future be able to keep a balance at their banker's, and snap their fingers at the bishop.'

It was quite true.

A man like the vicar, even if he be an indifferent preacher and but an incompetent clergyman, cannot read God's word and preach His message, and receive into Christ's flock, and read under wintry skies and summer sunshine that most tender and touching Order for the Burial of the Dead, without being sure there is something in it all: something which makes the mere fact of stepping across a grave to fame, rank, wealth, a very sad and solemn act; that renders rejoicing in such a case as unseemly as the mirth of a fool, and for an hour places the utter worthlessness of money prominently before the eyes of even the most impecunious of created beings.

CHAPTER IV.

THE height of the season in the year 1873—that year in which the Shah visited England, and the most exclusive people in Christendom bowed down, almost to a man, and worshipped Mammon in the person of an Eastern barbarian.

No story related of the diamond-decked monarch was at that time too improbable to receive credence. All London stood on tiptoe, trying

to catch a glimpse of an inner life said not to be over edifying; and the very presence among us of a man at whose nod heads could disappear, who thought no more of ordering a 'slave' to be killed than a careful housemaid of sacrificing a spider, gave an impetus to trade and a brilliancy to the West-end which it was devoutly to be wished could be repeated in 1879.

In all ranks, amongst all classes, the Shah was a household word. Tom Thumb created no more profound sensation. The popularity of the Claimant may have proved more enduring; but even that was by no means so universal as the homage rendered to the Shah. We have outlived it, and we have well-nigh forgotten the furore he caused, as we have a habit of forgetting most things; but it may be doubted whether we have ever since been so apparently jovial, rich, or prosperous, although 'seventy-four, I fancy, is named in the City as the last plentiful year before there set in the dearth of richness, pleasantness, and confidence which marks the era we have now reached.

To most of the Yarrells life in 'seventy-three seemed very pleasant. They had grown accustomed to their new state and their strange wealth. In very truth, the old life at Bersey seemed like a far-away dream. It is true Sir Hubert was always troubling himself because he could not do sufficient good; and, indeed, he had never learned the art of doing good efficiently. Lady Yarrell was annoyed to find twelve thousand a year and an old family-tree could not make her a queen of society; and Susan was saddened because nor word nor line to her had, during five long years, arrived from her lover.

She had been faithful to him; but he—she did not like to say he

had not been faithful, but she felt afraid her memory of the olden story was more tenacious than his.

However that might be, she was free from her engagement—had long been free. She could have married any one of the suitors who asked her hand; but to each and to all she answered No.

A softened look, a kindly smile, a gracious word, and lo, the deed was done.

They who came to wed enrolled themselves as friends; and there is many a wife in England who knows she had once a rival in fair Susan Yarrell, and who does not fear to say so.

The new life was very pleasant to her at first; but in the year of which I write she was growing somewhat tired of the eternal round of pleasure party-giving and party-going.

‘If you would make up your mind to regard me as the old maid of the family,’ she said one day to her widowed kinswoman, Mrs. Dallwood, ‘I really think we should all be a great deal happier.’ But Mrs. Dallwood shook her head.

‘Early times for that, my dear,’ she answered. ‘You have had a grand passion, I suspect; but you will outlive it. I myself—I, who speak to you—was once over head and ears in love—indeed, am still in love—with a man who never asked me to marry him. If he had, I should have accepted him to a certainty, and—been miserable. After all, Susan, love is not everything.’

Susan did not answer, though she thought it was a great deal.

‘I think it rather too bad of you not to marry, after all I have done for you,’ proceeded her friend. ‘Had you been my own daughter, my own very own, I could not have toiled more indefatigably in

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your behalf; but you will not help me. You do nothing—smile on no one. You have been out nearly five years. In two years more you will be, as that saucy boy of mine said the other day, a quarter of a century old; and you are yet unmarried. My dear, my dear!’ and Mrs. Dallwood shook a warning finger as she spoke, ‘I will pop in and say how d’ye do to your papa before I go,’ she went on, almost in a breath. ‘With his books as usual. Bless the dear man! He loves them better than he ever loved anything, yourself excepted. Of that I am quite certain; but don’t tell your mamma I said so.’

And with this caution laughingly uttered, Mrs. Dallwood trailed her long train down the ample staircase of Yarrell House, and, peeping into the library, asked,

‘Is any one at home? It is only Georgie, who wants to have a chat with her old friend.’

With that simple courtesy which never failed him, Sir Hubert greeted his garrulous kinswoman.

‘I knew you were here,’ he said, ‘and should have come up, but I thought you were having a confidential chat with my dear Susie.’

‘Quite right, Hubert,’ she answered; ‘and now I want to have a confidential chat with you. Why does not—why will not—Susan marry?’

‘Had not you better ask Susan yourself, Therese?’ answered Sir Hubert.

‘No; she has never volunteered her confidence, and I do not want to force it; but I should like to know. I wish her to marry Mr. Forrest. Who is there stopping the way?’

The baronet paused. He too desired that his child should make this match, but he would not urge

her to it. He had his memories, his story; and they made him pitiful with regard to the love-tale he had seen unfolding page by page.

'When we lived at Bersey,' he began, after a pause, 'there resided at a certain place a gentleman called — But no; I will not mention names. The story is all you desire to be told.'

Mrs. Dallwood inclined her head. She was a shrewd woman, and knew, if she required to do so hereafter, she could put two and two together in five minutes.

'He was not wealthy. If he had been we probably should not have known him so intimately. It was a fine old place, a lovely place; but the owner was almost as poor as ourselves. He was a widower,' proceeded Sir Hubert; 'a maiden sister kept house for him, and there were sons and daughters, and a nephew. I never recollect the time when Susie and that nephew were not promised to each other. I think when she could scarce toddle she was called Tom's little wife.'

'And what became of Tom?' asked Mrs. Dallwood.

'He went for a soldier,' answered the baronet sadly. 'All his people had fought for their country, and why not he? Ay, I remember the day he came across to show himself to us in his uniform. I can see his open handsome face, his frank laughing smile. I can hear the tone of his voice. My poor lad! my poor, honest, honourable boy!'

'Did he die?'

'No; O, no. He went out to Abyssinia, and there performed a deed of valour which gained him the Victoria Cross and sent him to Malta invalided. We have not seen him since. My darling wrote to him, and he never answered her letter. I also wrote to

him to say that our change of fortune could make no difference in my feelings towards him.'

'You dear simpleton, I'll be bound you did; and what answered the hero?'

'He thanked me; but he said the engagement must now be considered at an end. He did not intend to return home. He had exchanged into a regiment ordered to India; and—and, in short, Therese, the lad was too proud to bring his poverty home to share our riches. I know that, I feel that, because—'

He stopped, and Mrs. Dallwood's lips moved, though no sound issued from them.

'What did you say, Therese?' he asked.

'I said nothing,' was the answer; 'but I was asking, like the man in Hawthorne's romance, for my lost life. "I want my happiness," cried poor Clifford. Ah, Hubert, what numbers of lost lives there are jostling elbows with us if we could only see them!'

If Susie had been present at that moment she could have guessed the name of the man Mrs. Dallwood had loved and never married.

'Well, at any rate, he is clear out of the field,' she remarked, after a minute's silence; 'and there is no reason why Susan should not marry Mr. Forrest.'

'I fear she will never care for any one as she did for Tom.'

'That may be; but I do not suppose you want her to go through life a maiden "all forlorn." Talk to her, Hubert. Tell her how happy she could make a good man.'

And Susan's father said with a sigh he would talk to her.

CHAPTER V.

'It is like a scene in fairyland. I feel as if I were walking on enchanted ground.'

It was Miss Yarrell who spoke—Miss Yarrell in the prettiest of dresses—Miss Yarrell standing on the softest of grass—Miss Yarrell looking with bright delighted eyes at a spectacle worth remembering.

Beauty, rank, fashion were before her eyes; the fairest of women, the most distinguished of men, the noblest in the land, were all grouped before her on historic ground.

'Not a step we take,' said Sir Hubert, 'but has been trodden before by those who have made England famous. Eyes long closed have looked at those magnificent hedges; lips that here will never open again have criticised those statues; scarce a tree but has its story.'

'My dear cousin,' interposed Mrs. Dallwood, 'let us live for a few hours in the present. I want Susan to see every thing and person she can see. Upon the like we shall probably never look again. We are making history at this moment, just as truly as your dead-and-gone celebrities made it long ago. If you prefer contemplating the mountain-ash you were speaking about as we drove along to looking at the Queen, the Shah, and this brilliant company, go and find it, if it be still in existence, by all means; but leave Susan with me.'

'His last look on that mountain-ash was his last look on Nature,'" quoted the baronet, referring to Fox.

'Yes; and we have now such an opportunity as may never again present itself of looking on Art,' retorted Mrs. Dallwood. 'It is, as Susan says, like a scene in fairyland. Behold our sweet and love-

ly Princess! see how pleasantly the Prince is smiling! Behold the Shah! It is a pity the elephant they had here in 1828 is not present, wandering up and down, eh, Hubert?'

'The Shah and his retinue give quite a sufficient air of "Asiatic pageantry" to the entertainment,' answered her relative; 'but still the elephant would have been an agreeable addition.'

'Do you see the rabbits scudding across the grass, away in that hollow, papa?' asked Miss Yarrell.

'Do you see the group in that tent, young lady?' asked Mrs. Dallwood. 'Pray remember the trouble I have taken in your behalf, and attend to nothing but the wonderful assemblage of which it is your extraordinary privilege to form a part.'

The young lady laughed.

'I am not ungrateful, indeed,' she said; 'but I think the scenery and the accessories go to make up the whole of this marvellous play. I fancy I must be dreaming. When I look back and remember Bersey Vicarage, I am sure it cannot be I. No transformation-scene was ever so extraordinary as this change. Ah!'

'What is it, Susan?'

'Only that poor gentleman.'

'Which poor gentleman? O, I see. Now what can induce a person so horribly disfigured to venture among such a company as this?'

'How is he disfigured, Therese?' inquired the baronet, interested.

'I can hardly say. I have only caught a glimpse of his face twice: once when he reverently lifted the hem of Susan's cloak, which the naughty puss was carrying so carelessly that it swept the ground; and again when he put some one aside who was blocking up our way out of Covent Garden. He has a

chivalrous manner, but he ought to go veiled, like the Prophet of Khoristan.'

They were at Chiswick, at the garden-party given by the Prince of Wales in honour of the Shah. It was a most brilliant company, and no doubt others besides Mrs. Dallwood had marvelled to see amongst that gay throng a man so stricken that he hurried away from the surprised glances that met him, and plunged into the lonelier walks leading through the wilderness, where he encountered but few of his species, and where the heavy foliage threw a welcome shade across his path.

'Where has your papa gone?' wondered Mrs. Dallwood, when the evening was drawing on.

'To find an old gardener or labourer, or some one who has worked here for more than forty years,' answered Susan. 'He wants to know if he remembers Fox and Canning.'

'Good gracious,' cried Mrs. Dallwood, turning to Mr. Forrest, who had joined her party, 'Sir Hubert is as bad as Miss Blimber; he cares for nothing which has not been dead and buried.'

'He told me,' remarked Mr. Forrest, 'he wanted to have a quiet look at the house Lord Hervey said was "too small to inhabit and too large to hang to one's watch." Chiswick is more truly classic ground to him than you can well imagine. He is in the spirit to-day, not with present Royalty or Eastern magnificence, but with Horace Walpole, and Evelyn, and Pope, and Gay, and Lady Holland, and all the rest of the people who have made Chiswick famous.'

'But we are making it famous too,' said Mrs. Dallwood, 'and why should he neglect us?'

Susan laughed, and yet there was a slight shadow across her face. She knew very well the

point at which Mrs. Dallwood was aiming. She understood perfectly she desired Mr. Forrest should have another chance of pleading his cause and—well—why not? Why should she still refuse to please him and all her friends?

She liked him; she esteemed him. He was aware her girlhood had been so passed as to render her indifferent to the follies and fashions and pleasures of the world; and he professed himself quite ready to adapt his tastes to hers.

He would accept her views that great wealth involved great responsibilities. He was more than willing that she, an almost dowerless maiden, should teach him—whose riches dated only from the success of his own father at the Australian diggings, and the prudent investments of the proceeds of those diggings by his grandfather, a rich sea-captain resident at Southbay—how to spend his income to the welfare of man and the glory of God; and she—

If she only could have schooled herself to forget the years and years during which she loved the lover who had given her up; if she could only have regarded as dead and gone the story of those years, their cherished associations, the glamour that seemed to hang around them!

Was this great party—this assemblage of the lovely and noble in the land—any pleasanter to her than the impromptu dances up at the Hall, the croquet on the lawn, the lingering walk home by moonlight, the cheery laughter of the young happy guests? No. She knew the life she would best have liked; but if God had appointed her life differently, should she murmur?

As a great lady could she not confer happiness upon many? And after all, as her father had long

taught her, was it not better to consider others than herself?

She had loved and she had lost—yea, truly; but could she not still do her duty to a man who loved her? She would try. In so many words she did not tell him this, during the minutes seized when Mrs. Dallwood chose to find amusement and occupation elsewhere; but she asked time to think over his proposal.

‘I like you so much, Mr. Forrest,’ she said frankly, ‘that I could not do you a great wrong. I must feel quite sure of myself before I promise to be all that you ask.’

It was not much, perhaps; but from her Mr. Forrest understood the words meant a great deal. He knew perfectly there was some old love affair that had stood hitherto between him and success, and he comprehended the struggle it must cost a nature like hers to overcome an affection evidently the growth of years.

It was clear to him she cared for no one in the circle to which she had been transplanted; whatever the story, its commencement could only be read in the annals of her simple and innocent girlhood. There was no page of her life open now which contained a word of that fair dream.

Some day, perhaps, she would tell him all about it—how the love struck root, how it grew, how it withered; but if she never spoke of that passage in the April of her life, he felt he should be satisfied; certain she would not give her hand till her heart could utter the solemn vows truly; convinced, if no other in the world were true, she was to be relied on; satisfied she would not wed him for the sake of his lands and his gold; and that if she ever came to him, it would be to make the very blessing of his home.

It was getting on towards evening. Ere long the period would be at hand for the guests to depart. Sir Hubert—who had long previously settled his mind as to the exact position of the room in which the ‘greatest debater the world ever saw,’ the most ‘Demostheanean speaker since Demosthenes,’ breathed his last; seen the great mulberry-tree; carefully inspected Scheemaker’s lions; the gateway which, through the medium of Pope, said,

‘Inigo Jones put me together;
Sir Hans Sloane
Let me alone;
So Burlington brought me hither;’

the antique statues from Adrian’s gardens; the most remarkable palm-tree on which the eye of man ever rested; and the hundred other objects of no great value in themselves, perhaps, but interesting because of their historical and literary associations—was beginning to remark what a pity it seemed Lady Yarrell had not been well enough to accompany them.

‘She will never behold such a sight again,’ he finished; and then Mrs. Dallwood laughed, and said,

‘Already, you see, it is fading into the past, and so becoming clear to your vision. Let us go down to the riverside, and watch the shadows and the sun playing at hide-and-seek.’

‘It is a pity the stream is not purer,’ observed a lady who was walking with them, and who seemed to know every square inch of the place, every tree and shrub and blade of grass within the walls. ‘To my thought the water is the loveliest object in the landscape, and flowing through such classic ground it ought to be bright and clear and undefiled. There is something very sad about the banks—sad, pensive, and dreamy. I wonder often when I am here, quite quietly by myself, what thoughts came into the minds

of the great statesmen and poets and wits as they wandered beside this still tranquil river. It always seems to me to be whispering about the nothingness of life.'

'It seems to me we are getting very melancholy,' interposed Mrs. Dallwood, seeing that Sir Hubert was about to follow the lady's lead. 'Let us go through the temple; there is a pretty view of the bridge to be had at the foot of the steps on the other side.'

They passed through. If aught in this world be an accident, it was only by the merest chance they entered the place at that moment.

It was empty, except for an individual, who rose from a bench when he saw them, and, bowing to the lady, hurriedly left the building, keeping his face bent down.

She turned and looked after him thoughtfully, with a wistful pity shining tenderly in her sweet face.

'That poor Captain Arkley,' she said, 'how sadly sensitive he is!'

In a moment Miss Yarrell's hand was on her arm.

'What name did you say?' asked the girl breathlessly.

'Arkley; he that was so terribly wounded in the—'

She was out of the place in a moment. Before her father could speak or Mrs. Dallwood interpose, she had hurried down the steps, and was speeding after the man, who walked drearily alone through the beauty and the peace of that lovely place, as he fancied he was doomed to walk drearily alone through life.

Her training had not been that of the great world. In this supreme moment she thought of nothing, remembered nothing, save the sweet love-story of old, and the cruel fate which had so distorted the handsome kindly face that even she utterly failed to recognise it.

Without a word of explanation

she understood. She forgot the years that had passed, the friends she had left, the goodly company on the lawn above.

'Tom,' she cried, 'Tom!' and as he turned, she stretched out her hands to him, and sobbed aloud.

Mr. Forrest had followed her, but he now retraced his steps.

'Let us leave them together,' he said to Mrs. Dallwood; and then he walked away silent and alone.

He too understood that the man did not live who could come between Susan and her lover now.

They stood together on the bridge spanning the Bollar; but neither saw the greensward sloping down to the water's edge, the wild cherry-trees, the expanse of broad park across which the westering sun was streaming.

With one hand he shaded his eyes, with the other he clasped hers, which lay on the parapet of the bridge. There was not a creature near them; they were as much alone as they might have been in some 'vast wilderness.'

She was not looking at him; down into the depths of the water she seemed to be gazing; but she did not see the sun shimmering on the river. Slowly, and as if wrung from her, the big tears fell one by one into the stream, while he gazed wistfully, mournfully, at the loveliness he had voluntarily relinquished, which he meant to go away and behold no more.

'I ought not to have come back,' he said at last; 'but the longing to look upon your face again grew into a fever which overmastered my strongest resolutions. I am happy now, Susan, and can leave you after this meeting with content.'

'You will never leave me again,' she said brokenly.

The birds sang their loudest—there was the plash of a water-fowl in the stream—in the distance

there was the sound of music—a gay strain came floating through the summer air.

‘I must, my dear,’ he answered. ‘You would give yourself to me. I know of your goodness and your faithfulness, but I could not accept such a sacrifice. When the very children—you remember how fond all children were of me once—cried if I came near them, I felt it was time to relinquish my hopes of a wife.’

‘But I am not a child,’ she exclaimed, ‘and you shall not relinquish me. What! had my poor face been marred, would you have taken back your love? Do you think it was your good looks I cared for? Do you imagine all the beauty in the world could seem as precious to me as your scarred features are in my sight? Love is not love which alters when it alteration finds. Nothing can part my heart from yours.’

‘Ah, Susan,’ he answered sadly, ‘you do not know what you are talking about—you do not understand the full weight of the burden you offer to carry with me. Even yet,’ he added, ‘you have never dared to look me full in the face. You have not seen the extent of the disfigurement I long to hide from the sight of my fellows.’

She lifted her head and wiped away her tears.

‘Let me look at you, then,’ she said; and he removed his sheltering hand and stood upright, with the evening sunshine streaming full upon him.

‘I think it is Sir Archibald

Alison,’ she began slowly, the loveliest light shining in her eyes, ‘who tells this story. A young lady was engaged to a gentleman, just as you and I were engaged. She loved him with all her heart, just as—’ she paused and smiled. ‘He went away, and while on foreign service he met with a cruel accident. He was maimed—crippled. So they told the girl about it. They explained that he was a mere wreck of the active handsome fellow she remembered; and they waited, expecting she would break off the engagement, from which he released her. Do you remember her answer?’

‘I never heard the story,’ he replied.

‘She said, “If he has body enough left to hold his soul I will marry him;” and that is my answer to you.’

He had faced the enemy, but he turned aside from her.

‘It cannot be, my brave love,’ he said. ‘It cannot, cannot be!’

But it was. She had her own will at last, and as the years pass by she fancies that the beloved face grows more like what it was in the old house at Bersey. She trusts that the quiet life, the satisfied heart, will in time counteract a portion of the distortion, and that some day he may cease to shrink from the gaze of strangers, and understand that all who know him forget the features so marred and seamed, and only remember the glorious bravery of the deed by which those scars were won.

BALMORAL, ABERGELDIE, AND DEESIDE.

It is a very good rule in travelling to place before one a definite plan and pursuit. It is not that you should be bound by an inexorable rule, and reject the adventures which happen to the adventurous, the sudden chances of good things which fall in the way of an enlightened and plucky traveller. But it is well always to have a central idea, fix the plan of the campaign, and make a careful study of the necessary books and maps. Now the river Dee presents an adequate object for the tourist. It has a course of some ninety miles, presenting manageable limits of time and space. We may trace the rejoicing stream from its outlet until we come to the far-off secluded Wells of Dee, the mystic source screened by several mountain precipices, the vast desert granite heights that close in upon and sentinel the sources. The Dee affords us bright and startling contrasts between the Highlands and the Lowlands. To the archæologist and historian the district is full of interest; but no interest of the past surpasses that belonging to the present, when our beloved Queen and her family have made their summer and autumn home by the side of the waters of the Dee. Every tourist by Deeside makes it a matter of feeling and loyalty to obtain at least a glance of the towered castle of Balmoral. And whether we seek the springs or the outlet of the Dee, there is one locality to which all tourists in these regions necessarily converge — Castleton of Braemar.

But, my friend, you and I will start from the station of the granitic city of Aberdeen. That granite, cut and dressed as only Aberdeen men know how to do it, has even served to construct the docks of Sebastopol. It furnished the granite for the Duke of York's Column and the waterside terrace of the Houses of Parliament. *Murray* speaks of false Aberdeen. He quotes the proverb, 'He's an Aberdeen man, and will go from his word.' It is wonderful how lying runs in localities. St. Paul says that the Cretans were 'always liars.' It so curiously happened that on two different occasions I was deliberately misled by Aberdeen people, although I do not wish to generalise from such narrow premises. We have just a few hours to spare, and let us escape that bustling assertive new city—the cold granitic city—to muse them away amid the shades of old Aberdeen.

I never enjoyed a few hours more or better. The contrast is so perfect between the old city and the new. As you go about you repeatedly recognise the old French element, especially the angular turret of the French château. This is revived, with a very pretty effect, in most of the new buildings. All tourists, for instance, are struck with it in Lady Willoughby D'Eresby's hotel at the Trossachs. The French taste for claret remains even to the humblest localities. In the smallest whisky-shops it is sold on draught. In Scotland the snug home-like little inn is almost unknown. There is often very

little between the big hotel and the whisky-shop. We make these mental notes as we go over the somewhat dreary distance between the two Aberdeens. It would have been still more distant, still more dreary, if we had gone by the marshy ground known as the Aberdeen Links. There is something very striking in the granite and the oak of the cathedral of old Aberdeen. And that little churchyard, which looks like a little bit of forest-land, the most wooded churchyard which I have ever seen, is a very touching and suggestive spot. Really marvellous is the oaken woodwork of the old college, where the delicately-carved panels give a multitude of rich designs for Gothic windows. The carved ceiling of the library is good, but the library itself struck us as being susceptible of several improvements.

But as we are going along the Dee it is just as well that we should pay our respects to the Don, hard by. The river flows beneath the 'Brig o' Balgownie,' beneath the single picturesque high arch, affording a strong contrast to the rapid current of the Dee. But the valley of the Don is more fertile than the valley of the Dee:

'A rood of Don's worth twa of Dee,
Unless it be for fish and tree.'

But, according to the fishing of a recent season, I do not think that the Don will yield to the Dee even in the items of trout and salmon. The bank rises very nobly, like a bank of the Rhine, as you go towards the river's mouth. 'The Brig of Don,' says Byron, 'near the "auld town" of Aberdeen, with its one arch and its black deep salmon-stream, is in my memory as yesterday.' Byron's residence at Aberdeen, and his excursions along the banks of Dee into the Highlands, were great factors in the composition of his character. His

mother had a share in the fisheries of the Dee, but was persuaded to part with them by her worthless husband, Captain Byron. The poet says:

'As Auld Lang Syne brings Scotland one
and all,
Scotch plaids, Scotch snoods, the blue
hills and clear streams,
The Dee, the Don, Balgownie's bright
black wall,
All my boy feelings, all my gentlest
dreams.'

He calls himself 'half a Scot by birth, and bred a whole one.' In his lovely little poem 'The Island,' written only a year or two before his death, he traces his enjoyment of mountain scenery:

'He who first met the Highlands' swelling
blue
Will love each peak that shows a kindred
blue,
Hail in each crag a friend's familiar face,
And clasp the mountain in his mind's
embrace.'

There are certain books of poetry which the tourist ought to take with him—Byron's earlier poems, Clough's inimitable *Tobie na Vuolich*, and Professor Blackie's *Ballads of Braemar*.

We get away from Aberdeen and really start for the Highlands. The train will take us some distance. It is not often that we see anything approaching to the nature of a remark in the bewildering pages of *Bradshaw*. But if you look at the tables of the Deeside railway—Great North of Scotland—you will find the note: 'The express trains only run during her Majesty's stay at Balmoral;' 'By this train only servants and coach travellers journey third class.' I observe that *Bradshaw* also mentions just overleaf that the station at Dunrobin is a private one. It is worth while to make this journey leisurely, and to stop first at one and then at another of the little stations. Most members of the Royal Family come down by the express to Aberdeen, and then proceed to Ballater by special train.

The first station out is Banchory, where Prince Albert resided when president of the meeting of the British Association at Aberdeen in 1859, 'where he was very comfortable.' His great speech excited much attention throughout the country, and the Queen's heart was very full of it.

Eighteen miles along the river you come to another Banchory; that is Banchory Ternan. Here the Feugh, coming from the Feugh Water, falls into the Dee; and there is a good route from Brechin, avoiding Montrose and Aberdeen. The village of Fettercairn is on this route, where the Queen and Prince Albert took up their abode *incognito* for a night; a brass plate in the commercial-room commemorates the event. Aboyne, with Lord Huntly's place hard by, is pretty. The old bridge over the Dee was swept away by floods, and then came the present suspension-bridge. Just opposite is Ballatriel, where Byron spent some of his early years. They still point out the cottage where his mother, then a poor widow, lived, and a neighbouring farmhouse owns the cupboard-bed in which he used to sleep. But we press on to Ballater, the terminus of the line. I think it was during a residence at Ballater that Byron obtained his first view of 'dark Lochnagar.' He a little exaggerates his familiarity with the mountain, as he only seems to have actually visited the locality twice. But such is the license of poets.

Lochnagar is, however, better ascended from Braemar than from Ballater. All the same, Ballater is a famous head-quarters on Deeside, and a very convenient starting-place. Quite a large town is growing up. The rents asked and obtained are so very high that a short 'let' will pay the rent for the whole year, and enable the proprie-

tor to put some money in the bank. Let us hope that it will not be like the City of Glasgow Bank. *Murray* gives a whole list of places to visit—mountain, loch, forest, castle, bridge, and glen. We are bound for Abergeldie and Balmoral; but we will not omit to discuss the fishing and hunting of these regions, especially in the past season. Now that the tourists go so much to the Deeside, let us hope that the painters will go there too. They might do for Balmoral what they have done for Melrose. At present the artist chiefly associated with it is Mr. Clear, who lately died, whose Highland paintings have been highly appreciated by her Majesty.

The journey from Ballater to Braemar, passing the royal abodes of Balmoral and Invergeldie, the villages of Crathie and Invers, ought really to be walked, and not done in a hurried fashion on the top of a coach. I have repeatedly been sorry to see people who have come hundreds of miles and spent hundreds of pounds to see Scotland—for instance, people who have come from the States and the colonies—hurry through the finest scenery without any time for deliberate and quiet enjoyment. Take that loveliest walk through the Trossachs, the mile and a half between Loch Achray and Loch Katrine. It is an enchanted district, which has drawn pilgrims from all parts of the world. The tourists lunch at the hotel, the whip is cracked, four horses start, and they are whirled through the scenery in about ten minutes. They have no time to examine the Trossachs in detail. They have no time to examine that other pass by the river Teith, not so wooded as the Trossachs, but exquisite in the lonely majesty of mountain and glen. I am sorry for them; sorry for the waste of time and resources,

and that they have missed one of the chief objects of the expedition. When you have done with the railway, and even before, it is worth while promenading every foot of Deeside.

The Queen and her husband made their first visit to Scotland in 1842. We find Prince Albert writing to his father: 'Scotland has made a most favourable impression upon us both. The country is full of beauty, of a severe and grand kind; perfect for sport of all kinds, and the air remarkably light and pure in comparison with what we have here.' Two years later the Queen abode for some time at Blair Castle; and we find her Majesty writing to her uncle, King Leopold: 'The place possesses every attraction you can desire—shooting, fishing, beautiful scenery, great liberty and retirement, and delicious air.' Osborne, however, 'as a loophole of retreat,' obtained a priority over Balmoral. In a long letter from Baron Stockmar, written from Loch Laggan, the Prince reads a description of a voyage to Scotland in 1847, which ought to be compared with the Queen's own account. The attention of Sir James Clark, both the friend and physician of the Royal Family, had been drawn by his son, the present baronet, to the fine bracing air of Deeside. He thought that it would exactly suit the peculiar constitution of the Queen and the Prince. The Clarks knew Aberdeenshire well. In the common-room of the old King's College at Aberdeen there is a beautiful portrait of the young Queen, presented to the university by Sir James Clark. We may here mention a gracious and characteristic act of her Majesty's. Some time ago she sent a great judge of art a recent sketch which had been made of her. But she accompanied it with a portrait taken soon after her ac-

cession, that he might know 'what they were like when they were young people.' Beyond the beauty of the scenery there was the recommendation of the peculiar purity and dryness of the atmosphere. 'The whole of Deeside, from Charleston of Aboyne to Castleton of Braemar, he held to be one of the driest districts of Scotland, and especially of the Highlands; and no spot along the valley to be more favoured in this respect than Balmoral. The causes of this were twofold: first, the sandy gravelly nature both of the lowlands and of the greater part of the surrounding hills; and next, the fact that the rain-clouds from the sea break and discharge themselves upon the range of mountains which lies between Braemar and the Atlantic before they reach Deeside.' 'We have been here a week,' writes Sir James Clark. 'The weather beautiful, and the place, as regards healthiness of site and beauty of scenery, exceeding my expectations, great as they were.' A most excellent account of all this Highland scenery is to be found in the Queen's *Highland Journal*, which might almost serve as a guide-book for Deeside.

We walk on by the side of the Dee, and feel that we are manufacturing health for ourselves. We come to Abergeldie Castle. It is very small; perhaps never castle was so little castellated. It is not, however, the Prince's only residence. In the vast forest demesne stretching far behind the house the Prince has two or three hunting-lodges. One of them is larger than Abergeldie itself, and last summer was fitted up and decorated for a royal sojourn. I forget the Gaelic name, but it answers to 'The Hut.' It is pleasant enough for the Prince's friends, when they have been following the deer or the 'partridge on the mountain,' to find

a table spread in the wilderness, and be spared a toilsome march homewards. The absolute quiet and seclusion of these hunting-lodges of the lords of forests must be most charming. They contain every provision for a rainy day, even if it is possible that a rainy day could keep them from their sport. This Abergeldie Castle lies close to the highway, with only the breadth of the Dee interposed. As I was passing, a cart had just deposited fish and game from Aberdeen. As this was done something curious was to be seen. At first sight it rather seemed like a Blondin feat. A man, seated in a sort of cradle, manipulated a pole overhead, and, with incredible velocity, swung himself across the river. This is the famous 'cradle' bridge, which has been in existence many years, and which will probably be replaced some day by a regular structure. There could hardly be boat or ferry at this point in the rapid stream. It is of the greatest use to the castle, as it saves a long journey round of several miles. The Prince of Wales can swing himself across, if need be, in a sufficiently agile way. The Princess, with her usual courage and good-humour, has been known to quietly take her place in the cradle, and in this primitive fashion be ferried across to the opposite bank.

The place formerly belonged to the Mowatt family. At one time it was simply a turreted square tower, to which some modern additions have been made, but these are not extensive. The Duchess of Kent used to take up her abode here; a most estimable princess, to whom the nation is under the deepest obligation for the earnest careful culture which she gave the future Queen. Since her lamented decease it has passed into the hands of the Prince of Wales.

Her death was the first great break in the happiness of the Queen's life, and in the circle of her home. Whenever one meets with a reminiscence of the Duchess—and at different times I have met with such—it is always infinitely to her honour. The Queen inherits from her mother her simplicity of taste and manner.

A lady told me that one afternoon years ago she went into a shop in Regent-street, which became a little crowded. There was rather an assertive lady, who did not consider herself sufficiently attended to, and complained that the master of the shop had passed her by in order to attend on a quiet little lady in black. 'That lady, madam,' said the shopman, 'is the Duchess of Kent.' At Windsor the members of the Royal Family will at times do some shopping; and it is always a great point that they should be served in the most quiet way in order to avoid observation. The Prince of Wales has been encountered in London shops. In these photographing days all faces are so well known that obscurity is not permitted to royal faces. The adventures of Haroun Alraschid, or of the Gude Man of Bal-langeich, would not be possible in these days.

Let us continue our walk by Deeside. There are several matters worth observation. Notice the two telegraph-wires. One of them goes on to Braemar, that mountain centre; the other turns aside to Balmoral. It has been very busy this season on behalf of her Majesty and the Cabinet Minister who, from time to time, is in attendance upon the Queen. The Minister, though constantly relieved, stays longer than any other guest. The rest-day, dress-day, and press-day are a rule at the royal abodes. Each visitor has a separate carriage and horses re-

served for him. It was at Balmoral that the Queen received the sad news of the death of the Duke of Wellington, the great news of the fall of Sebastopol. In her Diary, written with a De Foe-like simplicity and directness, the Queen tells how the news came to them. Last autumn, on the royal Highland domain, the Queen has had the grief of losing her trusty friend and councillor General Biddulph. A granite monument to Sir Thomas rises near the place where he died. The tourist should notice also the various cairns on different heights. There are cairns upon cairns to Prince Albert. One cairn commemorates the marriage of the Princess Royal, and another that of the late Princess Alice.

You turn aside up a narrow road to the village of Crathie and its now famous parish church. No sumptuous chapel rises at Balmoral, but the Queen recognises the strength of the parochial tie. This is somewhat distressing to the Anglicans, but is of course highly pleasing to the Scottish Presbyterians. The service at Crathie is quite an institution. The Presbyterians have relaxed a little of their old severity; the church has some fine stained glass in memory of the Prince, and also of Dr. Norman McLeod. The Queen, however, by no means attends regularly, the service being frequently held in the drawing-room of Balmoral Castle. Her Majesty seems to be as keen a critic in sermons as ever was Queen Elizabeth herself. She has heard every preacher of eminence in the Scotch Kirk. Some she has often recalled; others she has been content to hear once for all. She has never taken any notice of the Free Kirk, which is perhaps one of the reasons why the Free Kirk is so anxious for disestablishment just now. It must be rather disappointing for an en-

raptured preacher, exhibiting the *præfervidum ingenium Scotorum*, to behold a quiet cynical smile or unmoved royal countenances. Then the preacher gets asked to dinner. I am afraid that the presence of tourists has rather annoyed her Majesty, and when she lately came back to Crathie church after a prolonged absence, the congregation behaved much better.

Of course we return, and keep to the great thoroughfare by Deeside. On the high-road between Ballater and Braemar there is no lack of coaches and private carriages. Pedestrians, however, are scarce, and I found this to be the general experience. Balmoral has a very striking and lordly appearance as you first come in sight of it, the great dark tower far and wide governing the landscape. It has often been described, and the description shall be attempted once more. The river sweeps by in rapid current, dividing it inexorably from the road, but a very fair view is attainable from the high-road. If you ascend the hill just behind the post-office of Crathie you look down most completely upon the groves and gardens of Balmoral. First of all, as you come from Ballater and leave Abergeldie behind you, there is a sort of little township which has gathered itself together on the side of the castle. Besides the domestics permanently stationed at different royal abodes, the Queen has a retinue of about fifty different servants who move from one royal home to another. In just the same way in mediæval times the village used to spring up at the base of the baronial abode. The township has a lonely, and to some extent indeed rather a mean, appearance. For instance, the royal laundry spreads out its snowy linen parallel to the royal palace. Here there are a small number of private

residences. Her Majesty had just finished another residence at the time of our visit, and was in course of furnishing then. It had not transpired for whom this residence was intended, and the matter was occasioning considerable speculation on Deeside. We pass the Abergeldie bridge, and immediately on one side you have the gates of the private grounds of Balmoral, and on the other is the road going to Abergeldie Castle. No one ever passes these gates unchallenged. Even the Queen's undoubted guests—whose servants are always clad in the Highland costume—have to render an account of themselves before they are allowed to proceed. It is observable that not a single soldier ever guards the gate or patrols the path. There are stalwart gatekeepers at the different lodges, and it is no secret that there is a supply of detectives in the neighbourhood. The tourist may cross the bridge, or go in the direction of Abergeldie, or even get into the Queen's drive, over Invercauld bridge in the forest, but beyond rigorously defined limits he is instantly stopped. The boy Jones would find it a much easier thing to get into Buckingham Palace than Balmoral Castle.

The lease of the property was originally bought by Prince Albert from Sir Robert Gordon, and when the lease expired the fee-simple was purchased from the trustees of the Earl of Fife. The present building was entirely designed by the Earl of Fife. The Queen first took up her abode at the old building September 8th, 1848. She describes it as 'a pretty little castle,' but evidently with only limited accommodation. A week afterwards we find her Majesty exploring the beauties of 'the wood of Balloch Buie.' The Queen has given us a vivid account in simple picturesque language of various

expeditions, longer or shorter, in her neighbourhood. It may show visitors and tourists in this part of the Highlands exactly the best journeys to take, and the best way to enjoy themselves. The old house was, in about five years' time, condemned, and the foundation of a new house was laid with great solemnity. Once a fire broke out, and Prince Albert assisted in extinguishing it. The Queen repeats at full the programme on the occasion of laying the first stone. The minister of Crathie 'made a very appropriate prayer,' and a ball was given in the evening. Two years later she took possession of her new and stately abode. 'We arrived at new Balmoral. Strange, very strange, it seemed to me to drive past, indeed *through*, the old house; the connecting part between it and the offices being broken through. The new house looks beautiful, is charming; the rooms delightful; the furniture, papers, everything perfection.' Next year matters were greatly advanced. 'On arriving at Balmoral we found the tower finished as well as the offices, and the poor old house gone! The effect of the whole is very fine. We walked along the river, and outside the house. The new offices and the yard are excellent; and the little garden on the west side, with the eagle fountain which the King of Prussia gave me, and which used to be in the greenhouse at Windsor, is extremely pretty, as are also the flower-beds under the walls of the side which faces the Dee.' Next year she writes: 'Alas: the last day! When we got up the weather seemed very hopeless. Everything was white with snow, which lay at least an inch on the ground; and it continued snowing heavily, as it had done since five this morning. I wished we might be snowed up and unable to move.

How happy should I have been could it have been so !' Prince Albert's great talent for laying out gardens, which he had conspicuously manifested at Windsor and Osborne, was remarkably displayed at Balmoral. The Queen writes in 1856 : 'Every year my heart becomes more fixed in this dear paradise, and so much more so now that *all* has become my dearest Albert's own creation, own work, own building, own laying out, as at Osborne; that his great taste, and the impress of his dear hand, have been stamped everywhere.' Since then great improvements have been constantly carried on at Balmoral. There has been a great extension of territory to the royal domains. The Queen now possesses all the miles of land between the bridge of Abergeldie and the border of Invercauld. In the early part of 1878 Mr. Farquharson sold his forest of Balloch Buie for ninety-eight thousand pounds, and it is understood that other purchases of land are in contemplation. The Queen has cut out new walks and drives through her forests, some of which are only just finished. The old bridge at Invercauld, so familiar to tourists, has been pronounced unsafe, and a new one has been opened.

One naturally cannot help making inquiries about the Queen when staying in the neighbourhood. It is a neighbourhood in which she goes about in a more free and spontaneous way than anywhere else. She could hardly go about at Windsor and Osborne as she does at Balmoral. The Queen is always dressed in a very plain and quiet fashion, which is itself a rebuke to the extravagant 'dressiness' of the present day. She will enter very humble shops in order to make very small purchases. These purchases are mainly intended as gifts to the poor, chiefly the poor

in her own service. She selects the articles, but never asks the price. The prices charged are exactly the same as to any one else. Besides this, the Queen regularly visits the houses of the cottagers. Some touching instances of this are given in the *Highland Journal*. 'Really,' she naïvely remarks, 'the affection of these good people, who are so very hearty and so happy to see you, taking interest in everything, is so very touching and interesting.'

I heard a very pleasing anecdote of the Queen one day on the coach-top as I went from Braemar to Blairgowrie. We passed a house which had belonged to a deceased general officer, a baronet, who had seen good service in the Napoleonic wars. He had built a house, an exact representation of Longwood, where Napoleon died. On a mound close by his gate he had erected a stand, where waved flags commemorative of all the different battles in which he had been engaged, and in the centre the flag of Waterloo. The Queen passed by, and amid all the details of her triumphant progress she omitted to notice this peculiar array of flags. The old general was sorely hurt by this omission, and bemoaned it greatly. He, however, had friends at court, and one of them ventured to speak to her Majesty on the subject. The Queen, in the most prompt and gracious way, was anxious to gratify the old soldier and relieve his mind. When she was next about to pass that road she caused an intimation to be given to him that the flags should be displayed as before, and that then he should fall into her cavalcade, and ride before her as one of her bodyguard to Balmoral.

Her Majesty's journey from Osborne to Balmoral is always an interesting personal event, and an important political circumstance.

It is also well known to be a great event in the railway world. The expense of the journey is calculated at about two thousand pounds. Printed notices are circulated at all the railway stations, and every detail is managed with the most exact care and punctuality. A pilot engine always precedes the royal train. Papers of instruction are extensively circulated over all the lines over which she travels. These are the most important days in railway history. But the Queen is never in a hurry to leave Scotland. She stays on late, stays on till every one who has come from the south has returned to the south once more. Her Majesty returns about the time that the last is seen of the ash-tree. The ash-tree is always the last to come and go. Tennyson says :

‘ Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself when all the woods are
green.’

Directly the summer weather breaks up the tourists scatter; but if they had only waited patiently there is often a brilliant season of fine weather in the late northern autumn. The Duke of Richmond goes away with the tourists, but returns for the shooting and rod-fishing. But be it observed that October and November are both mild months. I have heard Mr. Justice Grove call November a positively warm month. Then her Majesty’s habits are most regular and most healthy, in this, as in other respects, setting an example to all the ladies in the land. She takes her daily walks and her daily drives. She generally takes two drives, the one before lunch and the other after lunch. The drives through her own forests are most extensive, but it may often be the good fortune of her lieges to meet her in her airings.

But now let us have a little talk

about the fishing and the shooting, the pastimes of the Highlands, with a slight retrospective glance at last season. If the reader has rented a shooting, or, what is more agreeable and certainly more economical, has been a guest at a shooting-lodge, he will be able to appreciate the statement that every bird must cost at least its half-guinea. Last season was good for grouse, but bad for partridges. Various shootings were unlet, and some were not shot over. There have been complaints about the early summer rains destroying the eggs and young broods; but that wariest and skilfullest of all poachers, the Scotch poacher, has very much to answer for, though his delinquencies have too easily evaded notice of late. I was talking one day last autumn with a man whose duty would rather be to look after poachers than to turn poacher himself. He had told me that he was not allowed to shoot game. ‘ But sometimes,’ he added, ‘ I aim at a rat, and find I have shot a rabbit.’ ‘ And sometimes,’ I said, ‘ you aim at a crow, and find that you have killed a game cock.’ ‘ Ay, ay,’ he said, with a frank appreciative grin. Mr. John Colquhoun of Luss, a great authority on the Highlands, complains greatly of the hill-poachers. In his *Moor and Loch* he speaks of ‘ a placed minister of the Kirk,’ a clever and popular preacher, who hunted the deer by moonlight in the forest, like jolly Friar Tuck of old. Many of the Saxons, when they come northwards, are puzzled by the Caledonian forest. A Scotch forest is like a Devonshire forest, Dartmoor and, in a less degree, Exmoor, trees being remarkable for their absence. It is all moor, rock, scrub, bog, and heath. I detest a *battue* as much as any man. There can be no real sport in shooting in a fowl-yard. But most men traversing a moor alone would be hopelessly knocked up

before they could bag a brace of game. Hence the necessity for keepers and gillies. It is when the beaters are greatly in excess of the guns that sport becomes slaughter. I have seen on the borders of Yorkshire and Lancashire moors as desolate as any in Scotland. Out of season they are lonely enough. For days and weeks the keeper or shepherd sees no human face. They tell a story of a man breaking stones upon the road, who was asked by a tourist if there was much traffic on it. 'Ay,' answered the stone-breaker, 'it's no ill at that; there was a cadger body yestreen, and there's yoursell to-day.' On that pathless moor a shepherd will get for the care of one thousand sheep fifteen pounds a year, a house, grass for two cows, fifteen sheep, and all those that die from disease or inclement weather. Once they were able to make a regular wine or ale from the heather. Even now the old grouse-shooters tell of an ale prepared on the moor made principally from heather-flowers, honey or sugar being added to produce fermentation.

The questions respecting these enormous wastes have often been discussed both from the economical and humanitarian point of view. It is remarkable that the Duke of Sutherland, who evicted all the poor tenants he could from his million of acres and more, seems now desirous to get them back again. He is reclaiming as much land as he can, and laying it out in arable farms with a proportion of pasture-land. It is an immense work, and will hardly be remunerative in his own day. The Duke employs all the resources of science and capital to reclaim the moor and the morass. The Aberdeenshire farmers are strong against game-preserving. They hold that no land, however moory, is irreclaim-

able, and they point to the fact that the hillsides were once clothed with luxuriant forests, which must have been more profitable than deer. Certainly the remains of trees are discernible through many so-called forests destitute of timber. At the present time there is a decided movement for everywhere reclothing the mountain with the pine. Once these hills were really clothed with timber or brushwood, but the time came when nothing could be described as more sterile than a Scottish mountain. An Englishman was once asked to inspect a Highland estate. 'By Jove,' he said, 'I have an apple-tree in Herefordshire which I would not swop for your entire property.'

Yet these forests are most lucrative to their owners. The rents paid are enormous, and not many years ago would have sounded incredible. Lord Dudley paid a rent of five thousand a year for the Reay forest. The five thousand pounds represent five thousand deer, as far as may be computed, and some sixty thousand acres over which they roam, comprising some of the loveliest of Scottish scenery. These deer are the finest in Scotland, often attaining eighteen stone, and they possess the peculiarity of forked tails. Lord Dudley does not seem very keen about his deer. Months of the season will pass away before he begins deerstalking. The deer of the other forests seem to find this out, and when hard beset flee for safety to the Reay forest. The Scotch have a great regard for the original Lord Ward, who first took a pleasure yacht into the almost unknown northern waters of Scotland, and set an example to tourists in penetrating to the farthest recesses of the land. Last season Lord Dudley had the famous Black Mount forest in Argyllshire, belonging to Lord Breadalbane, paying 4500*l*.

The forest stretches for twenty miles, the haunt of the finest red deer; and the sport has been excellent, though deerstalking is exceptionally difficult in this country. Lord Aveland is credited with almost the best shooting last season in 'lone Glenartney's hazel shade.' The Inverness-shire shootings reach a total rental of some 65,000*l.* a year. It is all very well for Professor Blackie, in his *Brammar Ballads*, to denounce the incursions of the Saxon :

'A London brewer shoots the grouse,
A lordling stalks the deer.'

The regret of the Gael is not that they come in such numbers, as that there may be a falling off in the number of his southron guests. The visitors furnish employment, promote trade, put heaps of money in brisk circulation, and increase the comforts and savings of the peasants. If they can really reclaim the wastes, and find sufficient food and employment to save Highlanders from emigrating, doubtless so much the better, but the issue is problematical and certainly remote.

And now let me say a few words about the rivers. Here the Scotch prudence often approaches to something like rapacity. In many places you stay at an hotel at great expense; you are obliged to pay for boat and boatmen, and the landlord insists that you give him every fish you take. He makes you do his work for him, and, instead of paying you for it, you have to pay him. It is very hard lines. If he is generous he will allow you to keep a fish now and then out of the many which we will hope you catch. The fishing in Loch Tay, the finest salmon-fishing in Scotland, is free; and a good fisherman may really be able to recoup himself a considerable proportion of his expenses. A stretch of river in the best part of

the season will let for a hundred pounds a month. So much a rod is generally charged; and a great deal too. As fishing-grounds are constantly being opened up in foreign countries, the Scottish proprietors will see well to moderate their tariffs. The fishing in Loch Leven has attracted a great deal of attention. Fishing-parties from all parts of Scotland resort thither. The affluents have been most plentifully stocked, and consequently many thousand trout have been taken, running, however, small.

But we must return to the fishing of the Dee. The Dee is wonderfully full of salmon. In 1451 Pope Nicholas V. (had he travelled in Scotland?) issued a Bull, expressly sanctioning fishing for salmon in the Dee on Sundays. The Pope, however, stipulated that the first salmon taken on a Sunday should be presented to the parish church. Sunday fishing grew unpopular. There was a great earthquake at Aberdeen in 1608, which was considered to be a judgment on Sunday salmon-fishing; and the fishers were solemnly rebuked. Still the fishing is at the present day capricious and uncertain. In summer weather the stream will run too shallow for fishing. When the waters rise, the fish rise too. The salmon are curious fish, reminding us of the fables told of the ostrich; when they hide their heads they seem to suppose themselves safe. In these waters the angler can see the bodies of large salmon projecting from sunken rocks, the head being hidden away, and can approach without disturbing them. You may see very fine salmon in the Aberdeen market which have been taken from the Dee, though the highest prizes of the rod have not recently been taken from its waters.

But we go farther up the river to the far-famed Linn o' Dee. If

you can see the linn after a flood, when the chasm is nearly filled, the effect is very grand; otherwise the expectant tourist may be a little disappointed. The Queen opened the bridge—of Aberdeen granite—in 1857, and has given an account of her proceedings in her *Highland Journal*. Lord Byron, in his youth, nearly lost his life here. His lame foot caught in some heather, and he fell. He was rolling downwards, when an attendant seized him and saved his life. All the tourists who reside in the two hotels and the many lodging-houses of Braemar, which is a sort of little capital of the Highlands, send out excursionist parties hither. But Braemar is the point from which so many excursions radiate. One of these is the Queen's Drive by the Muich stream to Loch Muich, where the Prince Consort built a hunting-lodge, a mile and a half from Altna-Ghaissac, where the Queen and Court sometimes reside. Other royal associations are with Birk Hall, which used to be Sir James Clark's place, and which the Prince of Wales once occupied for a time. A delightful old man was Sir James. His advice to a young bride used to be, 'Keep yourself nice and attractive, my dear.'

The Queen went up to the very source of the Dee in her ascent of Ben Muich-dhui: 'The wind was fearfully high, but the view was well worth seeing. I cannot describe all, but we saw where the Dee rises between the mountains called the Well of Dee; Ben-y-Gloe, and the adjacent mountain, Ben Vracky, then Ben-a-bourd, Ben-aan, &c.; and such magnificent wild rocks, precipices, and corries. What a sublime and solemn effect! so wild, so solitary; no one but ourselves and our little party there.' The great object of the Deeside tourist is to penetrate

to Glen Dee. This is a truly remarkable scene. Comparatively few tourists attain to it, but it is the most extraordinary of the river-cradles of the world. This dark savage glen is often called the Devil's Glen, from the vast escarped precipices which encircle it. A storm in the Devil's Glen is thought the most fearful of all storms. Tributary torrents stream down the precipices. One of them falls a thousand feet from the mural rock of Braeriach, and in so much volume that by some it is considered the true source of the Dee. But the true sources lie farther on. Three or four miles beyond this tributary torrent there are five basins or ponds of water on rising terraces, through which a river flows. Looking upwards you see a thin stream falling over the cliffs of Ben Muich Dhui. It is there known as the Logie. The river is lost amid enormous rocks, and for some slight distance disappears in a subterranean passage. Then it glides between walls of cliffs, and a rapid descent fills those five granite urns which are called the Wells of Dee.

And so we leave the river, and as we do so we give a parting thought to the august solitary lady in the noble castle, whose associations will make the Dee a poetic immemorial stream. There is a vast charm of contrast presented by that royal modern castle. The contrast is furnished by the great calm and seclusion of the spot, and the busy intellectual life which is transacted within its walls. The Empress-Queen is now the greatest depositary of political knowledge in the country. There is no statesman who may not gain by the experience, the wisdom, the courage of her Majesty. There is no political crisis that arises in the councils of Europe, there is no disaster that may happen to her lowliest sub-

jects, no intellectual movement, no religious or philanthropic effort, which is not in its measure felt and appreciated by the Queen. Amid the holy silence of the vales, the forest, and the glen, haunted by the sweetness of a solemn and elevating memory, the widow Queen watches over the destinies of her people. The news is flashed along the wires, the couriers arrive with their despatches, statesmen and courtiers come and go, and in

the Highland home the urgent duties of the Throne steadfastly proceed. Who will not wish that the pure river-wave, the musical woods, the keen mountain airs, the seclusion, and the peace, may have a restful healthful effect on the Lady of the Land, and help to prolong the life which is so inextricably interwoven with the interests of the Empire, and the devoted affection of a loyal and loving people?
F. A.

THE FOUR VOICES.

By sober Brown Beard, whom men guess to have seen
Of winters and summers some thirty-and-seven,
Tripped lightly Gold Tresses of sweet seventeen,
The bonniest creature on this side of heaven.

‘How pleasant the evening sighs that stir
The rustling leaves as the woods grow dim!’
Such aimless words spake his lips to her,
But his heart was muttering low to him:

‘O, that the summer of life were spring!
O, to have found her long summers ago!
Is it yet too late? Would this bright young thing
Give the hope of her youth to—ah, no, no, no!’

‘Yes, pleasant it is when the woods grow dim,
To hear the sound of the leaves that stir.’
Such trivial words said her lips to him,
But her heart was whispering low to her:

‘Is there ever a man like the man that I see,
A man like the Bayard of ages ago?
He thinks me childish and foolish, ah me!
Could he really care for—ah, no, no, no!’

Quoth his lips, ‘Good-night; you are now at home.’
Prayed his heart, ‘God love her, whose ever she be!’
Said her lips, ‘Good-night; you were kind to come.’
Sighed her heart, ‘No; he never, could never love me!’

MY SHELL AND SHARK STORY.

BY A NAVAL OFFICER.

CHAPTER I.

‘WHO feels inclined for a day’s shelling?’

‘No one, I should imagine, possessed of an atom of common sense.’

‘What an idea!’

‘O, it’s only Markham.’

A general laugh followed the last observation, which once more brought the interrogator’s head from behind his curtain.

But to render the foregoing intelligible, and to bring me in a fair way for spinning my yarn, I must ask my readers to leave dear old England and its fogs, come through the Mediterranean, through the Suez Canal (it wasn’t open in those days), down the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, and on board H.M.S. Bee, lying snugly at anchor under the high land of Cape Guardafui.

It is breakfast time (8 A.M.), and the ward-room officers are, with one exception, seated round the table, the exception being Markham, who, having had the middle watch, is not supposed to make his appearance till ‘one bell’ (8.30).

For the benefit of those unacquainted with the interior economy of a man-of-war, I may mention that round the ward-room (the mess-place of the superior officers below the rank of captain) there are small curtained niches—yclept cabins—about six feet square, which are, so to speak, the officers’ private quarters: bedroom, bathroom, sitting-room, library, study, &c., all merged into one, a perfect *multum in parvo*.

Markham, not having completed his toilet, listens to the remarks his question has called forth without comment; but the last, ‘O, it’s only Markham!’ was rather too much; so, as I have before written, out came his head from behind his curtain.

‘Well, Doctor,’ he says, ‘suppose it is only Markham. What then?’

‘Simply, my dear fellow, Mellon’s remark holds doubly good.’

Mellon was the first who had responded to Markham’s query. He was our senior lieutenant, and had been disrespectfully dubbed by the middies ‘Old Sobersides.’

‘O, every one knows your ideas, Doctor, and if we followed your advice, it’s precious little we should see of the shore, except before sunrise or after dark.’

The Doctor’s crotchét was the sun; he objected most strongly to either officers or men being unduly exposed to its influence, and had on more than one occasion, by appealing to the Captain, nipped some pet expedition in the bud; the leading spirit of these expeditions being nine times out of ten Markham, whose present craze was conchology.

Within the last few months H.M.S. Bee had been stationed at Trincomalee, which is a famous place for shells; here they are sold in sandal-wood boxes fitted with trays, and arranged in order. Some of us had invested in one of these boxes, hence the mania.

At Markham’s rejoinder the Doctor quietly chuckled, and remarked,

'There goes "one bell;" you'd better be quick out of that den of yours, my boy, or you'll find your breakfast cold.'

'By Jove! I forgot that; but hold on, I'll talk to you in a moment.'

In a few minutes Markham emerges and takes his seat at the table, 'armed for the fight and eager for the fray.'

'Now, Doctor, I'm ready for you; fire away!' was his opening remark.

'I've nothing more to say on the matter,' replies Esculapius.

'No? So much the better, then; for I shall have more time to eat my breakfast in peace.' He relapses for a moment; then recommences,

'Well, who'll come with me? I purpose landing abreast the ship, walking across the valley (it's only about four miles, perhaps less), searching the beach for shells, and then returning. We'll take an interpreter, so that in the event of meeting any of the natives he can "parley-voo" them, and I'll take my breechloader as some kind of protection—not that it's likely to be wanted; and as regards provender, we'll get the steward to put us up a hamper in which Mr. Bass will be duly represented. Now don't all answer at once. Who'll come?'

No one accepting the invitation, he turned to me.

'O Louis, do come, there's a good fellow; we're sure to find some shells, and—who knows?—perhaps some rare specimens. Besides, after all said and done, it's better than remaining moped up on board all day.'

'Don't you wish you may get it!' the Doctor chimed in. 'Louis is too old a bird to be caught with chaff.'

'Your advice wasn't asked,' Markham replied rather angrily; 'so perhaps you will be good

enough to allow Louis to answer for himself.'

Seeing Markham was really bent on carrying out his project, after a great deal of hesitation, and sadly against my better judgment, I eventually consented.

'What, Louis,' the Doctor broke forth, 'you surely are not mad enough to countenance such a freak?'

'Well, yes, Doctor,' I answered; 'as I've consented I suppose I must go; but never fear, our pith hats will protect us from the sun.'

'And we'll take umbrellas, Doctor dear,' Markham added mockingly, 'and so defy the naughty sun.'

'Well, all I can say is, if you both get fever and sun-stroke it will serve you very well right.'

With this parting salute—his eyebrows and chin elevated—the Doctor rose from his seat, and took himself off on deck, muttering as he left the ward-room something that sounded uncommonly like 'One fool, &c.'

'Thank goodness,' said Markham, 'we've shut up "Old Pills;" so now let's go and get Boko to join us. He's sure to come, for he is really shell mad.'

'All right; where is he?' I asked.

'O, as usual, in his cabin cleaning shells.'

'Let us go and interview him, then; for if he comes, we're sure to have some fun.'

But to understand why we were so anxious to enlist Boko you must know something about him.

Boko was the life of the mess. Not a young man, by any means; on the contrary. He had been dubbed Boko years before by a South Sea chief, and the sobriquet had stuck to him. Boko, by his own showing, had been everywhere and seen everything. It was little he couldn't do, and no-

thing he wouldn't attempt. Full of the most wonderful anecdotes, at which he himself laughed loudest. His laugh was contagious; for although one had heard the yarn perhaps a dozen times before, it was impossible to avoid laughing at his thorough appreciation of his own jokes. He was as well known as a town pump. From this it will be seen that Boko was a character. He was indeed! Good-natured to a fault, and usually ready to join in any mad freak. In effect he was more like a boy of twenty than a man considerably on the wrong side of forty; but this was Boko's weakness. He hated being thought an 'old buster,' to use his own expression. His real age was a mystery; his hair was quite white, having become so, he averred, in one night. The cause thereof he was always somewhat misty about; so his statement was accepted *cum grano salis*. The Doctor had once taken it into his head to find out how long Boko had been in the service; and by questions now and again as to the time he had served in different ships, all of which he noted down, discovered that, allowing him to have entered when he was thirteen years old, he had reached the very respectable age of ninety-eight.

Well, whatever his age, Boko was a right good fellow, as any of my readers who may recognise the description will own; and we all agreed that, although his tales were certainly marvellous, he himself believed them implicitly.

We found Boko sitting cross-legged on the deck of his cabin, with a wooden tub before him, cleaning shells—not savoury ones, by any means. We did our best to induce him, but he was deaf to our entreaties.

'No, no, my boys, not much,'

he said. 'You won't catch Boko stirring tack or sheet' (Boko was intensely nautical) 'out of the ship, if we stop here a twelve-month; it's the most cutthroat doghole of a place I was ever in, except—' and here came some wonderful place no one had ever heard of. He wanted to button-hole us for a yarn; but having neither time nor inclination to listen, we left him scrubbing away at his shells and roaring with laughter—at what, we knew not.

Outside Boko's cabin we were stopped by two of the youngsters, who wished to be of the expedition. They were capital specimens of the genus 'middy,' both as handsome boys as one would meet. Dauntmore, or Jack, as he was always called, rejoiced in being six feet one in his stocking feet, although only seventeen, whilst Handel was of medium height, and about the same age. We gladly consented, our permission of course being dependent on the Captain's.

We had some difficulty in obtaining the Captain's leave. He didn't like the idea, and told us so plainly; but Markham's importunity eventually overcame his scruples. But he gave us to understand that he held us responsible for the youngsters. His anxiety was entirely for our personal safety, the natives of this district (Somaui Arabs) being treacherous in the extreme. Their character was very neatly summed up by a chief of Socotra: 'Never let Somaui man walk behind you; he spear you sure, if can do, and no get catch.'

I may mention that within six months of the incidents here narrated a boat's crew of H.M.S. Penguin, numbering eighteen men, was surprised at this very place, and every soul murdered in cold blood.

All being ready for starting, we found that both interpreters wished to accompany us; and as their services were not likely in our absence to be required on board, they received permission. We did not burden ourselves unnecessarily. Dauntmore (Jack), Handel, and I carried a walking-stick and flask of water; Markham a flask and his breechloader; and the interpreters each a fishing-basket, in which was stowed 'comforts.'

We did not get clear of the ship without sundry sarcasms from the Doctor, for which Markham gave a *quid pro quo*. Whilst the boat is making her way on shore, I will try and describe the locality. The description must be borne in mind, as the realisation of my story entirely hinges on it.

A reference to any atlas will show Cape Guardafui, the north-east point of Africa. The bay in which H.M.S. Bee was anchored is immediately within or on the western side of the cape, whilst the beach we purposed visiting is without, or on its eastern side. The two bays, or rather indentations, are separated by a narrow sandy valley about four miles wide. On the cape side the valley rises gradually to a height of five or six hundred feet, which elevation forms the cape. From its summit the cliffs fall perpendicularly to the sea; around their base the deep sea comes rolling in; no break, no beach, simply a shelf of rocks about twelve feet wide, covered at high water. This shelf extends round the cape from one beach to the other.

The commencement of our trip was not propitious, for on landing we found our path barred by a stalwart native brandishing his spear, and demanding 'backsheesh;' the only answer he deigned to the interpreter's in-

quiry as to what he wanted was 'Backsheesh, backsheesh!' and as he spoke he laid his spear across the pathway. At this Markham lost his patience.

'Hassan,' said he to the interpreter, 'just inform that copper-coloured individual that if he doesn't make himself scarce, and pretty quickly too, I'll give him such a dose of "backsheesh"' (touching his breechloader) 'as he doesn't bargain for, and not in his hand either.'

What Hassan said to him I can't vouch for; but the noble savage, doubtless thinking 'discretion the better part of valour,' and perhaps not altogether appreciating Markham's looks, after gesticulating, swearing, and scowling, made off to the rocks, at intervals facing round and shaking his spear defiantly at us.

The path now being clear we set off on our journey, and had not proceeded a quarter of a mile ere we found, to our cost, that our walk was likely to be a very different affair from what we had anticipated, and I must e'en confess that, had it not been the fear of being laughed at on board, we should have given up in disgust.

Our way lay over soft sand, in which, at every step, we sank up to our knees; in addition to which the sand was literally carpeted with a description of creeper bearing large thorns from two to three inches in length; these thorns pierced the leather of our boots as though it had been paper, and consequently made us most careful as to our every footstep. O, the scorching sun! Not a breath of wind; and the very air we breathed seemed straight from a heated oven. The glare also from the sand was most painful.

At times, from the sand giving under our feet, we found ourselves on all fours; and then, to vary the

monotony, at full length on our back, gazing at the heavens; and on each and every occasion thorns, thorns, thorns!

At length, footsore, bleeding, parched, and weary, we reached the opposite beach, having taken four hours to encompass the distance, some three or four miles.

The sea-breeze had now set in, which made us, comparatively speaking, 'new men;' so after bathing our 'poor feet' we proceeded to discuss the creature comforts.

Imagine our feelings on opening the baskets at discovering that the drinkables consisted of two pint bottles of beer, and a bottle of brandy; not a drop of water, and not the faintest hope of procuring any; facing us the sea, and landwards in every direction for miles a glittering expanse of white sand; our flasks had been emptied long since, and we were parched with thirst. Blessings were not poured on the steward's head. I blamed Markham for not having seen what was put up, and he retaliated on me. Recriminations, however, were useless, there was nothing for us but to make the best of it; so having divided the beer into six portions, each drank his share. Instead of relieving, it only served to intensify our thirst.

Further investigation as to the contents of the baskets showed us that the edibles consisted of salt-beef sandwiches, cheese, sardines, and bread—all, with the exception of the bread, thirst-provoking; so they remained untouched.

It was now 2 P.M. Shell-hunting was out of the question, as it would take us all our time to get back by sunset.

'Well, Markham, how do you purpose returning?' I ask. 'I vote round the Cape, for I'll be hanged if I tramp back through that horrid valley again.'

'Don't be an idiot!' he politely answers. 'You know the old adage? "Rather bear those ills we have, than fly to others that we know not of."' (Markham never missed an opportunity of a quotation.) 'You see,' he adds, 'the tide is already making, and as sure as you attempt it, so sure, before you are half-way, you'll either be tide-bound and have to take to the cliffs, or else you'll be washed off the rocks.'

'You're certainly a Job's comforter,' I reply; 'but, notwithstanding, I'm determined to risk it, if any one will join me.'

At this Hassan and Jack elected my route, Ali and Handel preferring to accompany Markham.

Ere starting homeward we each took a thimbleful of brandy, and then consigned the remainder to the waves, fearing that thirst might perhaps tempt us to drink it: we also arranged our sumptuous banquet on the beach as an offering to Neptune.

I trust he appreciated it more than we had done.

Before parting company Markham tried very hard to persuade us to alter our resolution, but was unsuccessful; so with a chin-chin off we set on our separate paths.

CHAPTER II.

FROM the conformation of the land, our routes for some distance lay nearly at right angles, mine being along the seashore, and Markham's across country. We continue in sight of each other about twenty minutes, during which time our walk is over a hard sandy beach, fanned by the sea-breeze; this brings us to the shelf, which I have before mentioned as encircling the cape from bay to bay. On mounting this

shelf we turn to wave a last adieu, but find that we have lost sight of our friends.

Our path lies before us, and my heart sinks within me ; for I discover, when too late, that I have shunned Scylla, only to fall into Charybdis. The shelf is at the most only about twelve feet wide, and covered with seaweed. On our right the sea, barely four feet from its edge, with a flowing tide ; and on our left the cliffs, rising perpendicularly to a height of five or six hundred feet, and showing scarcely foot-room for a goat.

'Pleasant,' is Jack's remark. 'But never mind ; anything is better than that vile waste of sand and thorns.'

For nearly an hour we pursue our slippery way, tumbling, scrambling, wading, often up to our necks in water ; but after recovering from the effect of our first disenchantment, in high spirits, and sanguine as to the result of our experiment: we cannot, however, avoid casting occasional anxious glances at the sea, which is slowly but surely approaching the level of our platform.

'Push on, boys!' is our cry ; and on we trudge, laughing at our frequent duckings, and helping each other out of our difficulties.

Presently we receive a gentle hint to put our best foot foremost by a slight sprinkling of spray. This makes us redouble our efforts, but to no purpose ; for in a few minutes every wave, as it strikes the shelf, envelops us in a blinding shower.

I look at my watch—four o'clock ; three hours yet to high water. Still on ! Ten minutes more and the waves are breaking at our feet. Fortunately the breeze is dying away, and the sea becoming calm. A wave rather stronger dashes in ; Jack is down. An in-

stant sees him on his feet again ; but to retain our footing is momentarily more difficult. Another dozen yards and I am off my pins. We can't stand this ; we must take to the cliffs. What will become of us ? As these thoughts pass through my mind, our further progress is arrested by a gap in the shelf some forty or fifty feet wide ; deep water, and the waves breaking at the foot of the cliffs. On the opposite side the shelf rises about six feet.

'Hurrah !' we exclaim. 'Once over that, and we shall be in safety.'

'Off with your coat, Jack ; we must swim it. Hassan will take our things over on his head.'

'All right, sir,' Jack replies ; and Hassan is soon ready, with our clothes in a bundle on his head. He is sitting on the rocks, lowering himself gradually into the water, and is on the point of letting go his hold, when Jack yells, 'Come back ! come back ! For God's sake, come back ! Look !'

I look, but cannot speak. We both seize hold of Hassan, and haul him bodily on to the shelf, his eyes almost starting from his head, his face an indescribable unearthly blue, and trembling in every limb. There, only a few feet from us, is a huge shark, his cold white eye looking up, half turned, showing his white belly, and keeping himself in position by a gentle motion of his fins.

For a moment not a word is uttered. Hassan at length breaks the spell. 'Allah, Allah, il Allah ! Allah Akbar ! Allah, Allah, il Allah ! Allah Akbar !' he drones forth in a tremulous monotone, the words following one another as quickly as his breath will allow.

Jack and I lose no time in robing ourselves.

'Don't sit mumbling there, Hassan,' I say; and enforce my words by a good tug at his wool. 'Look alive, Jack; there's nothing for it but the cliffs.'

We are now almost knee-deep in water. O, how I wish we had taken Markham's advice! But we have no time for vain regrets. We get close to the cliffs to prevent being washed off the shelf, and retrace our steps in the hope of finding some place of ascent, and providentially soon discover one.

'Quick, quick! here is a chance. Be careful! Hold on like grim death; it's our only hope.'

In less time than it has taken to write we are making our way by inches up the face of the cliffs. Our position is awfully precarious, and a false step certain death; yet (speaking for myself) I am most thankful that I am out of water. I notice, as we scramble higher and higher, that the sound of the waves is growing more indistinct. Soon it ceases altogether, and I am flattering myself that we must be nearing the summit, when my head butts against some obstruction. For the first time I now dare take my eyes from my hands and look round. A hundred feet below is the sea (the shelf is completely submerged); above, an overhanging rock which shuts out the sky.

'Go on, sir!' uttered by Jack, are the first words spoken since leaving the shelf.

'Can't get any higher, Jack,' I reply. 'We must go back, until we find some place where we can sit down.'

To remain as we are for any length of time is beyond human endurance. A few words explain this to Hassan.

If ascending had been dangerous, descending was ten thousand times more so; every minute seems a lifetime. Luckily the tension

on our nerves is not of long duration. About twenty feet beneath the rock which had stopped our ascent we find sitting room.

By this time we are all pretty well fagged; our hands are torn and bleeding, and we are suffering intolerably from thirst. A short rest, and then comes a discussion as to our future movements. Immediately below, and on our left as we sit facing the sea, is a ledge, which appears as though it had been scarped out of the face of the cliff. As far as we can see along it, it is about two feet wide. We see also that it spans the gap; so it strikes us that if we can only manage to work ourselves along this ledge until we are on the western side of the gap, the chances are that we shall be able to descend on to the shelf, and so continue our journey.

'Well, Jack, what's to be done?'

'I don't know, I don't know. I wish I hadn't come.'

'Nonsense, boy; nonsense! Never say die; make the best of it. We must do one of two things—either remain here, or cross the ledge. You know perfectly well that we cannot expect a boat until Markham gets back, when, finding that we don't turn up, they will come in search of us. But long before they arrive it will be dark, and then it will be impossible to get down out of this; so take it as you will, here we shall be obliged to remain until daylight to-morrow.'

'If I have to stop here till to-morrow,' he replies, 'I shall go mad.'

'Very well, then; we must try the ledge.'

Very easy to say 'try the ledge,' but the thought of it even is sickening. Imagine a mantelpiece two feet wide, eighty or ninety feet high, upwards a per-

pendicular wall, downwards a sheer fall, and you have before you the ledge, with the exception of the former being level, whilst the latter is quite the contrary.

The more we look at it, the less we like it; but beggars can't be choosers, and we have no time to waste.

'Come along, then,' at last Jack says in desperation. 'You lead, Mr. Louis; I'll follow, and Hassan shall bring up the rear.'

Jack was reckoning, however, without his host.

'No, sar! I not go! I stop! I 'fraid! I no like it!' Hassan joins in.

'Very well, stop, then,' Jack angrily replies. Then, 'Go ahead, sir; he'll follow, never fear.'

We scramble down a few feet, and I get on to the ledge. As I turn my back to the sea, and grasp the face of the cliff, my heart almost ceases to beat; I notice too that Jack is deathly pale, so remark that perhaps after all it will be the safer plan not to attempt it.

'Go on, for goodness' sake!' he hurriedly answers.

Seeing that he is determined, I make room for him, and we commence crossing, making our way by a sidelong movement, clutching where there is clutching room, and feeling the right foot securely placed before bringing the left up to it, our eyes alternately fixed on hands and feet.

Hassan, as Jack had said, had no idea of being left in the lurch, so without remark had dropped into his allotted place.

For a time all goes well, and we get over the ground very fairly, when, without any previous warning, we are brought to a standstill by the ledge sinking about five feet; not a gradual slope, but a sudden drop.

Going back is out of the ques-

tion; so kneeling down, and clinging for bare life, I lower myself inch by inch until I am again on my feet.

Moving slightly to the right, I wait while the others descend; soon they are beside me, and we continue on as before.

'Are we to keep on like this for ever?' Jack asks.

The words are scarcely out of his mouth, when on extending my right arm my hand strikes against the rock. One glance, and the fact rushes on me. The ledge ceases! We are in a veritable *cul de sac*!

My sensations I cannot now analyse, although every incident is as fresh on my memory as on that day, now thirteen years since.

I tell Jack that we can go no farther, and must return.

'I can't do it,' he gasps. 'I'm feeling sick and dizzy; I sha'n't be able to hold on much longer.'

At this juncture Hassan chimes in,

'Sar, sar, I nearly falling!'

I am at my wits' end, when suddenly it occurs to me that, if I can turn and sit down, I may be able to help the others.

'It's all right, Jack. Hold on, old fellow,' I say; 'don't funk.'

Having the dead wall on my right to cling to, I succeed without any difficulty, but for my companions it is a very different affair.

'Now, Jack, come close to me; put your right hand on my shoulder, and kneel down.' This he does mechanically. 'Now place your arm round my neck, and I'll clasp your body.' This is accomplished. 'Now let your right leg hang over the ledge.' This also he does. 'Now lean the whole weight of your body on your left knee, turn slightly, so as to grasp my collar with your left hand, and shift your right until you bear on my thigh.'

He manages this, I still retaining my hold on his waist; then, by gradually shifting his right leg over his left and keeping his body well inclined inwards, after a moment of awful suspense he is sitting beside me with his long legs dangling over the precipice. My next move is to change places with Jack; he with his left hand takes firm hold of the wall, and I put my arm round his waist to steady myself.

In half the time it took to seat Jack, Hassan (who is as lithe as an eel) is in position.

To make matters worse, Jack now breaks down completely, laughing and crying by turns, and trembling to such an extent as to cause me to cling to him lest he should drop off the ledge.

Hassan is immobile; he neither speaks nor moves, but sits with his eyes fixed, staring vacantly.

Let any one picture our plight as we sit side by side, with our legs overhanging the shelf, some hundred feet beneath us.

We can look back along the road we have come, and find that we have crossed the gap: the drop (or rather rise from this side) plumbs its centre. Had it not been for this rise we might be able to regain the position we had left ere attempting the ledge, and which now from the force of comparison seems a very haven of refuge.

My first care is to soothe Jack, which after a time I succeed in doing, so much as to make him talk coherently.

The poor brave lad excuses himself, and says, 'I'm not frightened, but I feel so weak and shaky, I'm sure I couldn't possibly stand on my legs.'

This is a self-evident fact, as he is still trembling like an aspen-leaf.

From the time of getting seated

I have been casting about in my mind for some means of escape from our quandary; but puzzle my brain as I may, I see only too plainly that our only hope lies in getting back so far on the ledge as to be able to drop off into deep water on the boat's arrival. The remedy is almost as bad as the disease, but it is absolutely the sole chance left us. But how to manage it? Neither Jack nor Hassan can trust himself on his legs.

Jack solves the problem.

'Couldn't we,' he suggests, 'shuffle along in the sitting posture?'

Happy thought! But Master Hassan (who is on the right, and must therefore lead the way) will not budge. First I entreat. No use. Then threaten. Still same result. As a last resource I tell him that if he doesn't move at once I'll pitch him off the ledge. This has the desired effect, and sets him in motion.

Our mode of progression is neither painless nor improving to our garments; still it is progress, and we are thankful for very small mercies.

At last we reach the rise; beneath us is the gap. The shark has taken his departure; but, to add to our misery, the sun is painfully near the horizon, and in these latitudes there is no twilight.

'Jack, could you manage, do you think, to mount the rise?' I ask, 'for then we can get back to our first resting-place.'

He shakes his head, and answers, 'Not to save my life.'

This makes me desperate, for it has just dawned upon me that a boat might pull about all night without discovering our whereabouts; so I resolve on making an attempt to find my way back; for I knew that although one boat would certainly be sent in search

of us, another was sure to be stationed at the beach on the chance of our return.

I communicate my resolution to Jack, but he implores me most piteously not to leave him. I urge him not to be childish, and explain that he has only to sit still and wait; and I remind him that he must not get impatient and out of heart if the boat doesn't arrive as soon as he expects. Ultimately he consents; and I mount the rise, assuring him that if I find myself unable to scale the cliffs he may shortly see me back again.

'Please be as quick as you possibly can,' are his parting words as I set out.

I recross the ledge, looking at every step for some means of ascent; finding none, I commence descending by the same path we had originally climbed. When about half-way down an opening presents itself on my left. I branch off a short distance, and soon am once more scrambling upwards as fast as the quickly fading light will permit.

Three bells (9.30 P.M.) are striking on board the Bee as I reach the beach, and sink utterly prostrate on the sand. A boat is in waiting. On coming too I find my head supported by the Doctor. 'Water, water!' are my first words, which he gives me very sparingly; he then has me carried to the boat, where I get some brandy, which revives me so as to enable me to tell my story. A boat, with Markham in charge, has already gone in quest; but in the twinkling of an eye we are flying through the water at racing speed to the rescue, impelled by the brawny arms of twenty British bluejackets.

We are no sooner 'under weigh' than the Doctor begins.

'I told you so; I knew how it

would turn out! What crass foolishness,' &c. This is too good a chance; so he prosed on, riding his hobby to his heart's content. I bear the infliction silently with a good grace, but am thankful when it is brought to a full stop by Boko—who is steering—hailing,

'Oars, men; here comes the other boat. Have you got them?' yells Boko, as soon as the boat closes us.

'No; can see nothing of them,' Markham answers.

'Come with us, then; Louis is here,' Boko calls back. 'Give way, men!' and with a will the boat's crew bend their back to the oars.

On we speed, shaping our course parallel to the cliffs. It is quite dark, and the sea calm as a mill-pond; the splash of the oars and the rippling of the waves against the rocks being the only sounds that disturb the stillness.

Presently Boko hails, 'Jack!'

No answer.

Ten minutes more, and again he shouts, 'Jack!'

This time a faint response comes to us from some distance ahead.

'Shove her along, men!' Boko excitedly urges; and the boat is almost lifted out of the water.

A dozen strokes, and the answer comes from directly overhead.

'Now you carry on, Louis,' Boko says, 'for you know the place.'

'Can you see us, Jack?'

'Only when the oars dip,' he answers.

'Where is the gap?' is my next question.

'Immediately under me, of course; but it is so dark that I cannot distinguish the water from the rocks.'

We are in the same predicament; so we get the boat stern on and back gradually in, guided by the sound of Jack's voice, hitting the middle of the gap to a nicety.

So far so good. Our first manœuvre is to thrash the water with the oars, so that in the event of the shark or any of his companions being in the neighbourhood, they might be warned off the premises.

This being done,

'Now, Jack, listen! We have left you plenty of room, and will keep the boat in position. You must turn and lower yourself gently over the ledge; but before quitting your hold, bring your legs together; and directly you let go, close your arms into your sides. No sooner in the water than we'll have you in the boat. Do you understand what I say?'

'Yes, I understand; but I don't know how I ever shall manage,' he whimpers.

'Let Hassan come first,' Boko suggests, 'and that will give the boy courage.'

Hassan's answer comes back very quickly,

'All right, sar; I come. Look out!'

We cannot see how he contrives; a splash in the water is our first intimation, and our dusky interpreter is speedily hauled on board.

It is no easy matter to persuade Jack. We all try by turns, but without success.

At last Markham (whose boat is at the entrance of the gap) gets impatient, and hails,

'Mr. Dauntmore, if you are determined not to come I shall order both boats back to the ship, and will return for you at daylight.'

This settles it.

'All right, then,' the poor lad moans. 'I know I haven't the strength, and shall tumble all of a heap. Look out for me! I'm coming!'

We are instantly on the *qui vive*, two or three of the men

more than half overboard in their anxiety to grasp hold of him.

We have some time to wait; then a plunge, and Jack is in the boat; he had, as he predicted, fallen 'all of a heap,' and was terribly shaken; his hands too are much damaged from striking the rocks in his fall.

'Give way on board, men!' is the order; and thankfully we quit the scene of our adventures.

Our anxiety is now about Jack; the Doctor is busily engaged with him, but he lies with his eyes shut, and has not spoken. We are half-way to the ship ere he regains consciousness, and then in a short time is quite delirious.

Signal-guns and rockets are now being fired, which bodes anything but a pleasant reception from the Captain.

The instant we are alongside the chief's head appears over the gangway.

'Are all safe?' is his first question.

On being answered in the affirmative,

'Let Mr. Markham and Mr. Louis come to me in my cabin at once.'

'Very good, sir,' from Markham, and he disappears. 'We're in for a wiggling, that's certain. What an idiot you were, Louis, not to take my advice! You know Jack is a personal friend of the skipper's, and this affair will make him a thousand times more particular than he is now. However, it can't be helped.'

On being ushered into the cabin, we found the Captain looking very grave.

'Why, gentlemen,' he commences, 'were you not on board at sunset? You know the station orders.' As he speaks he catches sight of me, and a broad grin spreads over his features.

Seeing his eyes fixed on me, I

wonder what on earth he can be smiling at. I look up, and catch sight of my face in a mirror. It is covered with a mixture of dust, perspiration, and blood. My neck-tie is gone, shirt buttonless, and neck exposed; and to complete, my nether garments are hanging in shreds.

‘Well, gentlemen, what reason have you to assign for disobeying, not only my orders, but the written orders of the commander-in-chief?’ he continues, on recovering the effect of my appearance.

Markham leaves me to reply; so I tell him precisely what has happened. He is very wroth.

‘You have a perfect right,’ he says, ‘to jeopardise your own life; but how dare you lead a mere child into such danger? I can only tell you this, if anything happens to Mr. Dauntmore, I’ll try you both by court-martial, as sure as my name is Benbow. That will do, gentlemen; you may go.’

We next had to endure the quizzing of our messmates; but, like good Samaritans, they let us off easily—for the present.

A good night’s rest and we are none the worse, except Dauntmore, whose adventures ended in a severe attack of fever. For days he raved of sharks and ledges, and great fears were entertained of his recovery. After a very protracted illness we again had the pleasure of seeing him crawl on deck; but he rarely referred to his Guardafui experiences.

Markham and his party had got back about ten minutes past

six; their return had been a repetition of our morning’s trip. He waited until 7.30, when, seeing no signs of our appearance, he hailed the ship for another boat to be sent to the beach, and went in search. When we met him, he had given up all hope, thinking that we must have been unable to scale the cliffs, and so necessarily washed off the shelf. This proves how correctly I had conjectured that a boat might pull about all night and not discover us on the ledge.

The next day a party was formed to visit the scene of our adventures. Three or four climbed up and got on the ledge, but none cared to cross it.

One thing remains a mystery to this day. Our third lieutenant and two men attempted to gain the summit of the cape by the same road up which I had toiled. From the boat we watched them. They succeeded in getting little more than half-way, when they came back, and told us that it was utterly impossible that I could have gained the top by that path, although they admitted that as far as they got there were marks showing that some one had recently been there.

How I clambered up I know not. The fact remains I got there, and, what is more, the latter part of the ascent was in the dark.

This was my first and last expedition in search of shells. Need I add that it was some time before Markham and I heard the last of our trip across country at Cape Guardafui?

A COOL HAND.

I.

I AM an Irish Adventurer.

I am proud of my country, and I am proud of my calling. I should be proud of my country were I a Kalmuck or Esquimaux—how much more reason for pride have I not in being a native of Dublin, which is admittedly the finest city in the finest country in the world? And as to my calling, it gives me brotherhood with every man who ever had a name worth naming in any country—strike the Adventurers out of your Histories, and what's left won't be more than a day's reading. And as to being an Irish Adventurer—I've heard that name sneered at in my time, but never by anybody whose head wasn't too contemptible to be worth cracking.

My adventures have had a considerable range, and I could write my own life in twenty volumes as well as any man. For the present, however, and simply by way of preface to a short account of the strangest of them all, I'll content myself, and pique the curiosity of the reader, by boiling them down into twenty lines. My name is Thomas Connor—an original O having been somehow lost in company with the rest of the family property, which had been regal in ancient times, but had been reduced to sevenpence-halfpenny on the day I came of age. It is true there were a few debts besides, but they could hardly be called possessions, seeing that I never knew precisely what they were. When my poor father died, nobody—not even himself—knew how much he

owed: and it wasn't worth my while to go through the court for anybody's benefit, seeing that sevenpence - halfpenny wouldn't have paid for the mere whitewash, not to speak of a dividend. But, though I found myself on my twenty-first birthday better cleaned out than a hundred tubs of whitewash would have made me, I found no reason to complain of my friends. It's rubbish, and I know it, to talk of the badness of the world to a man when he's down. You'll be nearer the mark if you'll talk of the badness of a man who's down to the world. When a man complains of having been cut, or kicked, take my word for it that somebody has for once got what he deserved. Why, I hadn't been one-and-twenty for four-and-twenty hours when I got a note from old Miles Cregan, whom my only sister, Kate, had lowered the Connors by marrying (for he was only an Attorney), offering me a free passage to New York and five pounds over, without a word about being repaid, and with no conditions except that I wouldn't come back to Dublin until I'd made three hundred a year of my own—which of course it wasn't likely I'd want to do. I took it all the kinder of Miles, because he was so fond of money that he wouldn't even let poor Kate help me when I'd now and then wanted a pound or two to get out of a scrape, such as young men will tumble into without any particular fault of anybody's: and once when I'd asked him myself for a loan, to be repaid punctually as soon as I'd be able, he said that he didn't invest in wild oats on principle—

and when a man talks of his Principle, you may be sure he means his Pocket, and nothing less nor more. But as soon as I literally hadn't eightpence in the world, and nothing left but to enlist or else to live on my wits, this very man disproved for ever all the cant about the world's cold shoulder, and did for his wife's brother what I don't believe he'd have done for his own son.

So I thanked him, as warmly as he'd let me—for he was one of those men who under a cold outside hide their hearts very much indeed—and then spent an hour alone with Kate, saying good-bye. I had no sweetheart just then, by some queer accident or other, so my sister was the last Irish girl I saw in Ireland. Poor girl! She cried when I told her how kind Miles had been, and tried to make me take all she'd got in her own own purse, which was nine-and-fourpence—I remember it now: but I didn't like to take advantage, for I thought that, being as real a Connor as myself, it was likely enough that she too might have a debt or two that she wouldn't like to tell Miles. The next day, with three pounds in my pocket—for two of the five had gone off somehow in the night—I sailed for New York in the steerage of the Hudson, with no ties at home except Kate, and my word of honour not to see Dublin again without three hundred a year of my own.

It was lucky enough that I'd spent those two pounds before starting; for the Hudson, as you may remember, went down not far from Newfoundland, and I lost the three that were left me. It was a bad start in life, but it might have been worse—and for that matter I've always noticed that nothing is ever quite so bad as it might be. I might have lost all the five

pounds, and Kate's nine-and-fourpence into the bargain: or I might have been drowned: or I might have been five feet instead of six feet high, and twenty inches round the chest instead of forty, and so less fitted to take a porter's place in New York than I turned out to be. But I gave myself twenty lines for my self-introduction—and I have taken nearly two hundred! I must omit therefore ten long years of adventurous ups and downs—my perils among miners and Indians in the Far West, my narrow escape from an Indian tiger, my second and third shipwreck (so that I began to stand in some fear of a rope for my end)—and come, at one bound, to where the arch adventure of my life began—namely, in South Africa. By the time I was thirty-one, I had not made three hundred a year; but I had got more than three-quarters round the world. And when I speak of the arch adventure of *my* life, I mean the most remarkable adventure that ever happened to any man.

I had been ostrich-farming up the country with a young Englishman named Paul Andrews—a fine fellow of about five-and-thirty. We got on famously together, though we were about as unlike as two men could be, and though we lived all alone. It's my experience that it's always easy enough to get on well with any man. He was a gentleman all round (by which, however, I don't mean to say that he was as unlike a Connor as my words might be taken to imply), and I always used to think there was a sort of mystery about him: even out there, and in his rough dress, and in the middle of our rough ways, he always used to look as if he was a Major in the Guards just dropped out of his club in a mistake, and yet, for all his cool and

easy ways, he'd be liable to fits of silence that lasted for days, followed by the sort of spirits that make a man seem as if he wanted to forget something. But though we lived like brothers, he never told me much of his past life—nor, for that matter, did I tell him much of mine, except maybe about the Tiger. No doubt I told him that, for I'll defy a man with a Tiger story to keep it to himself altogether. I'd sometimes a sort of fancy that though his name might be Paul, it might turn out not to be Andrews—and when one suspects an *alias*, it's bad manners to ask questions. I have myself not always called myself Connor: when one's proud of one's name, one doesn't like it to be carried by everybody that one may happen to be in the course of a voyage round the globe. He was handsome, but it was in a different way from myself—that is to say, while he was also a fine figure of a man, he was dark, almost like an Italian, with brown eyes that seemed to dream straight into the very middle of you, and hair to match—he'd have stood, for all he was an English gentleman, for a portrait of one of Byron's Blackguards. He didn't drink much, and he talked less—except when he was in one of his fever fits, as I used to call them, and then he'd show, without making a show, that if he wasn't an earl himself, he'd been hand and glove with them that are.

Somehow, however, though ostriches are undeniably cheap beasts to feed, ours didn't do very well. Whether feathers went out of demand, or whether there was a glut of them, or whether it was the new fancy for cheap funerals, or whatever it was, we didn't find them pay, and we did find them die off in the most spiteful manner you can conceive. So one day, said Paul,

'Tom, let's go for diamonds.'

'We will,' said I.

During six months we went for diamonds. I had my regular luck; that is to say, it was never quite the worst possible. I wasn't robbed or murdered, either of which would very likely have happened to me if I'd found anything worth robbing me of or murdering me for. Paul's luck was worse than mine, for example. I did find a few trifling stones, which we shared, being partners, and so kept body and soul together; but I don't remember his finding any at all. I began to think he was a downright unlucky man; and, though a Connor can't desert a man of his own accord, I wasn't altogether displeased when he said to me one night, when we were drinking whisky and water—that is to say, I the whisky, and he the water,

'Tom, old man, this won't do. We don't get on as partners. We've tried feathers, and we've tried stones; and I don't know which is the worst speculation. Let's dissolve. You stay where we are, and I'll go a mile or two higher. There's a vacant bit there; and if that turns out no better than this has done I'll—I'll turn missionary, and see if that will pay.'

In an adventurous life we get used to sudden and eternal partings from our closest friends, and take them easy. It's odd how little one minds other good-byes when there's one big 'good-bye' sticking like a knife into one's heart; for ten years had made me want to see Dublin and poor Kate again, and I wasn't a bit nearer to them than when I left them. So I only said,

'Maybe you're right, Paul. Anyhow, there's no harm trying a change. But it isn't fair that I should have the chance of staying where we know there's *some* stones, and you should go where we know

pretty well beforehand there's none at all. No, no. I've better luck than you, anyhow; I'll go and you'll stay. You're too generous by half, my boy.'

'Nonsense,' said he. 'Perhaps I'm going because I don't want to stay. I sometimes think I'm the Wandering Jew. No, no. You make the best you can of the old ground, and let a wilful man go his own way. Whether you move or not, I sha'n't stay here.'

Yes, there was clearly a mystery about this man, young, handsome, with an iron will, with no vices, who would have been an ornament to a crack regiment or a duchess's drawing-room, and yet hiding himself in poverty and Africa. I couldn't make it out at all. I didn't like to be outdone in generosity by an Englishman; but I felt it was a kind of destiny that was driving him, and that, as he said, his boots were beginning to boil. So the next morning we just shook hands, and said, 'Good luck to you, old fellow!' and then he went his way, and I mine, without more ado than if we expected to meet again at supper-time.

Will I ever forget that day? I hadn't been at work three hours before I knew myself to be master of a more splendid diamond than I had ever dreamed of in my wildest dreams. Yes, in our wretched little patch I had lighted upon an African Koh-i-noor! Don't turn up your nose at Cape diamonds if you have never seen that one. It was a queen; and a tug at my heart told me what our patch was going to be.

Our patch? It was *mine*; it was the sole property of Thomas Connor. With a vengeance indeed had Luck turned at the departure of Paul Andrews—poor devil! It was a sin and a shame. He had lost his share by three hours; and all because he had been

generous, and had given up the old ground to me. My first thought had been, Now for Kate and Dublin! My second was to get hold of a horse, and to gallop like mad after Paul Andrews, to bring him back again into the firm; for I could no more have kept that luck to myself than I could have picked a pocket. I knew which way he had gone; and one doesn't get far in that country in three or four hours. But though I rode as much like mad as the nature of the beast, and of the ground, would let me, I couldn't come up with him. He wasn't at the new place, nor anywhere else that I could hear or find. And though I tried for days, and was more or less on the look out for months after, no news of Paul Andrews could I hear. I almost felt like a thief; but there was no help for it. I could do nothing but put my back into things, and work away.

II.

It was the height of the season when the South-Western Railway brought me from Southampton to London. It was with a sore heart that I made my first visit to the English instead of the Irish capital; but it couldn't be helped seeing that I had not yet three hundred a year of my own; and Connor rhymes with Honour, as all the world knows. But I had what was worth it, if people were half as fond of diamonds as they are said to be. For that matter, I had, in the rough material, three hundred a year without counting the big stone, my first and finest find, which I had christened Kate Cregan, and meant to give to my sister in return for the nine-and-fourpence that she didn't give me, poor girl! And it would be a delicate way of repaying Miles;

for of course one couldn't pay back a kindness in common dirty coin. I'd had it cut and set at Capetown; and I kept it about me till I could put it on Kate with my own hands.

But though I couldn't see her in Dublin just yet, I wrote to her—maybe Miles would let her run over to London, to have a bit of fun with a brother who hadn't turned up quite so much like a bad penny as had been expected of him. I hadn't written home since I'd been away, because, for one thing, I'm a bad correspondent, and, for another, I never knew from day to day where I'd tell her to send an answer. And I didn't write much of a letter, even now, only a line or two just to say how glad I was to be back, and that I'd be free to come to Dublin in a week or two, and that I had turned up trumps in diamonds, and was her loving brother Tom. I didn't mention African Kate; that was to be for a surprise. Then I went to work, and settled my affairs as well as I could for the hurry I was in to be back in Dublin again; and, for all my hurry, I did pretty well. Meanwhile I'd been to a real tailor, and got him to make me look a little less like a ruffian than I'm afraid I did when I landed at Southampton, not forgetting a suit of dress-clothes; for though I didn't know a soul in London in those days, an adventurer soon finds out the need of being ready for anything that may turn up at any time.

I was beginning to wonder, as the days went by, that I didn't get a line from Kate; but I thought nothing wrong, as why should I? I'd never been in London before; and I had plenty to do in the way of sight-seeing. Even staring about the streets and the Park was enough just then for a man raw from Africa. The very day my dress-

clothes came home, I had a fancy to put them on; for I'd never felt myself dressed like a gentleman before, in all my adventures. So, having nowhere else to go, I took a stall at the Opera, and amused myself by thinking, 'Well, Tom Connor, when you went down under the sea off Newfoundland, it's little you ever expected to be turning up here.' And then, for the life of me, I couldn't help giving a thought to poor Paul Andrews, who ought to be where I was, if I was any judge of faces at all; and who wasn't, just because he'd dissolved partnership an hour too soon. And I was beginning to feel lonesome too in London, where I didn't know the people nor the ways; and the foreign music didn't seem up to Kate's old piano before she married Miles; and the new clothes didn't feel to fit me somehow. I was wanting the old pipe and the old canvas jacket, and the grip of an old chum's hand.

With my eyes off the stage, I chanced to let them fall on the finger of a lady that sat beside me. I didn't think much of the finger, but I had diamonds in my head, and I noticed she wore one in a ring that wasn't to be named beside my own big one, only it was set in a way beyond anything they were up to in Capetown. It made me feel ashamed of the style of mine, or of Kate's rather: so I took a note of it in my mind, and settled to have it copied, or bettered if possible, by some first-rate jeweller. I don't know what the lady was like to this day, for I spent the rest of the time taking a photograph of the ring on my brain: and the next morning I took a hansom and drove to a man whom I'd been introduced to already in the way of trade. His name was Graves.

'I want a stone re-set,' said I;

‘and when you’ve seen it, I think you’ll say it’s worth the doing.’

I put my hand into the breast-pocket, where I always kept it, in a little leather case, wherever I went, and— I’ll never forget the cold shiver that ran down from the roots of my hair into the tips of my toes when I found it wasn’t there! The jeweller waited patiently enough, while I felt in every pocket I’d got, thinking as hard as I could where the stone could have gone to. Surely there couldn’t have been a hole? And yet there might be, for I hadn’t been to the tailor a day too soon. In another minute I stood before the jeweller with every pocket I’d got turned inside out, and hanging like bags all over me. But nothing fell out, and there wasn’t a ghost of a hole.

I had never looked for such a thing as that, anyhow. It’s enough to bother a man to miss a diamond that’s not worth a penny less than eighteen hundred pounds: and what made it the worse was that I’d given it to Kate, so it wasn’t mine to lose. But lost it was; for I never had it out of my breast-pocket, so that if it wasn’t there it couldn’t be anywhere. I began to wonder if my diamonds hadn’t been but fairy ones after all, like fairy gold, that, as soon as you think you’ve got it safe, turns to chips and straws.

‘I expect you’ve been robbed, Mr. Connor,’ said the jeweller. ‘London’s a bad place for a man with stones like that, if he doesn’t know the ways.’

‘As if,’ I said, ‘a man that’s been in San Francisco, and New Orleans, and the Diamond Fields, ay, and Dublin too, wants putting up to the ways of London, or of anywhere!’ And it isn’t likely he would either. ‘As for being robbed, it’s not possible. I’ve always kept it in this breast-pocket, under my

right arm; and a tougher right arm you’ll not find in a month or two;’ and that was true too. ‘I’d like to see the London thief that would try to rob me.’

The man had a trick of smiling, and he smiled then. ‘Of course you’ll go to the police?’ said he. ‘They sometimes find that a man has been robbed, even when it’s impossible. Who knew of your having this diamond, Mr. Connor?’

‘Not a soul. We learn to hold our tongues where I’ve been. You’re the first man I’ve spoken to of it since I left Capetown.’

I don’t know why, but he smiled again; I suppose it was a manner he had with him. ‘If I were you,’ he said, ‘I should go straight to Scotland Yard—the head police-station, you know.’

‘Not a bit of it,’ said I. ‘I know the ways of the peelers, anyhow, and the lawyers. I’m looking for a letter every post that’ll call me to Dublin by return of mail; and they’d be keeping me kicking my heels here while they were on the traces, as they call it, of some poor devil that had no more to do with the stone than you. Why, do you think I’d be robbed of a diamond like that under my very nose? I’d have to be made drunk or knocked down; and you may try me yourself, both ways, and see if that’s easy. No; I’m sorry the stone’s gone, but it’s no more stolen than you are: and what’s gone’s, gone; and it’s only fools that bother.’

And it’s true I was vexed more for Kate’s sake than my own; for it’s sure enough that worrying over gone things is waste of time.

But the jeweller wouldn’t rest so easily. I believe he thought me a simple stranger that wanted looking after instead of a man who’d seen more of the world in ten years than he had in fifty. He made me describe the stone to

him three times over, and wrote it down, setting and all, and said as my business in Ireland was so important he'd spare me the trouble of going to Scotland Yard if I pleased.

'That's as you like,' I said, as if a diamond more or less wasn't of much account to a Connor—for it doesn't do to lower one's dignity before a tradesman. 'And of course I thank you for being so kind.'

'You'll have to offer a reward,' said he.

'I'll leave that to yourself,' said I. 'Anything in reason of course I'll pay, to get the stone back again. And I'll bet you ten pounds to one that it's not been stolen.'

'I don't bet,' he said, with another smile. I thanked him again, in an off-hand way, not to let him see how really vexed I was about it all, and went home.

But I was vexed, and the more I thought about it the more vexed I grew; for I'd just set my heart on giving Kate this diamond. 'I wish I hadn't let that fellow go to the police,' thought I. 'He'll be sure to make some mess or another—I think I'll go myself, after all, and see that things are done properly. I'll drive to Scotland Yard, wherever it is, this very afternoon.'

Of course I'd hunted high and low for the stone, but it was no more in my lodgings than it was in my pockets; and I asked all the questions in the house that I could without hinting that it was a diamond I was looking for. I couldn't believe it was stolen, even now; but still there might be a chance if the police were put on the scent by a proper reward. But, all at once, just as I was thinking the least of poor Kate herself, and the most of her stone, a letter came in.

It wasn't from Dublin, though.

It had only a London post-mark, and I didn't know the hand. I don't know, when I think of it now, whether it was fact or only an after-fancy, but the minute my fingers touched that common-looking letter I seemed to feel it was ill news. I opened it. Dated from London—signed Miles Cregan—what would it mean? What would Miles Cregan, the Dublin lawyer, be doing with No. 24 Melton-street, Mayfair?

And how is it that the very look of a letter, like a look of a face, will tell you, before you read, if the heart of things is changed?

'Dear Brother-in-Law,—Yours to hand. I am heartily glad you have prospered so well. Of course there is no objection now to your presence, or even to your residence, in Dublin. I am no longer there, which accounts for all delays in my receipt of your letter. I regret to have to inform you that your sister Catherine has enjoyed for five years the delights of another and better world, which makes it impossible for her to give you in person the welcome which you appear to have earned. For myself, I always believed you would eventually become a credit to your friends, though at the time I was disbelieved; but you have doubtless not forgotten the practical proof I gave of my confidence in you. I gather from your letter that the news has not yet reached you of my marriage, by means of which, and of Providence, I have transferred my office and practice from Dublin to London, where I have always had many clients, chiefly young military men of excellent family. As I am naturally anxious to be of service to my first wife's only brother, I may be able to invest your capital to better advantage than a young man, without experienced and affectionate aid,

would be likely to do in this Den of Thieves where I practise at this present. It would also give me much pleasure to make you such advances as you may require upon merely formal and nominal security. I am occupied by business during the day, but it will give Mrs. Cregan as well as myself the greatest pleasure if you will come and see us next Wednesday evening. A few friends may drop in, including some young military men of excellent family; but we are very quiet people, and I wish you to look upon this informal invitation as of a purely domestic character.

'Believe me to be, my dear Thomas, affectionately yours,

'MILES CREGAN.'

My heart swelled for a minute as if it would burst, and then sank down as if it had turned to frozen lead in me. Poor Kate—the only girl I'd been coming home for: the only soul there was to give me a kiss of welcome after eleven years—and she was dead, and I had never known. I sat for I don't know how long holding Miles's letter in hands that were nigh as dead as her own. . . . 'The hansom, sir,' said the servant, from the door. 'Hansom! what hansom?' 'The one you wanted fetched to go to Scotland Yard.' 'Then send it away!' What did it matter about *that* diamond any more—Kate of Africa, when Kate of Ireland had been buried five years; ay, and forgotten too by her own husband, and by everybody but me? I would not have had that diamond back now, no, not if it were the Koh-i-noor.

I need not tell the story of that day and evening. It seems odd that I should have done without my sister for more than ten years, and without corresponding with her even, and yet that her death

should have struck me just like a blow. I'd never thought of the chance of her dying: and while she was alive, or while I thought her so, though I never saw her or heard of her, I hadn't felt quite alone in the world. But I did when I woke up next morning and lay half thinking, half dreaming about it all—terribly alone. I'd made money, but I hadn't a kinsman that cared twopence for me, and we don't make friends in my sort of life—we only make chums, who seem to come no-whence and to go no-whither. Paul Andrews had been most like a friend while he lasted, but he hadn't lasted. Of course I'd go and see Miles. His new offers of help were just doubling all his old kindness, and I somehow liked him for himself a little better now that he wasn't Kate's husband: I had never liked to think of him in that way. She seemed to have come back to the Connors now she was gone. And, anyhow, I hungered so much for the feel of somebody's hand that I'd have taken Cetewayo's even, if he asked me—and I must get him to tell me the last of Kate if he hadn't quite forgotten her. He was the nearest to me now, after all; and if the new Mrs. Cregan had got a child or two of poor Kate's, to whom she was perhaps acting as a good step-mother, and if they took to me, I might find something to do with my money now that it didn't feel of any more use to me. I didn't want to meet Miles's officers, but no doubt I'd be able to have a talk with him over a late pipe when the others were gone. So I just wrote him a word that evening to say I'd come, and set off for a twenty-mile walk, to get rid of the blue devils, and make myself feel like a man again. What's death after all? I've seen him face to face often enough, and I never

could manage to think much of him. But poor Kate! It's easy preaching when one isn't one's own congregation. I doubt if she was ever quite happy with Miles, but I did wish she hadn't died quite so soon.

III.

It is not very far from Norfolk-street, where I was lodging, to Mayfair; but somehow it took me a long time to get to Melton-street on Wednesday evening. It wasn't till the last minute that I made up my mind to dress; and I only did at last because that was the only way I could go in decent mourning, though of course after five years nobody but myself would notice how I chose to go. And then I got hold of a cabman who didn't know the town, and as I didn't either, we lost a good deal of time on the journey. I was afraid to look at my watch when I got there at last, for Miles was an early man at both ends of the day. I was in too much of a hurry to notice much about the outside of the house as I went up to the door, though when I thought of it afterwards I called to mind one or two little things that might have surprised me; but when I was inside, 'Faith,' I thought to myself, 'things have changed with Miles as much as they have with me—the new Mrs. Cregan must have had money anyhow.' Indeed, at first I could hardly believe my own eyes. Miles had never been anything but rich, but even in the best Dublin days he'd been content to live in a little house and in the plainest way: the biggest thing in the shape of an entertainment was a potluck on Sunday to his priest and his doctor, and a tea-fight every now and then. But if I'd been in a duke's house I couldn't have been in a finer one than he lived in now; and as for the few friends, there were hun-

dreds of them all down the stairs—if he calls this a few, thought I, he must be hail-fellow-well-met with all London. And if Mrs. Cregan had money, she knows how to make it fly too: I don't see much here to remind me of Miles. And to think it was the merest chance I hadn't come in a light shooting coat—the thought of it made my hair begin to stand on end. Even now I don't know how or where to begin, I was so taken aback by the big hall, and the staircase that an elephant might have marched up, and the light, and the perfume, and the flunkies, and the guests, and everything I didn't expect to see: and down the stairs I heard music the like of which I'd never heard but once before, and that was at the Opera. I'd half a minute's mind to turn tail and run, though it had been my sister's house and was my own brother-in-law's now; but before I knew where I was, I found myself drinking coffee in what seemed to me a bit of the National Gallery, where I'd been a week ago, mixed up with one of the hothouses at Kew. I'd never seen anything to beat it, not even in Dublin, though there are some fine houses there: and I felt proud to think that Miles was keeping up the credit of the old country, though it must have made him sore at heart to pay the bills. I wondered where he was, and, having finished my coffee, I went to the stairs, and by and by began to move up them. There were some pretty girls there, especially three or four that I'd ask Miles to introduce me to as soon as I could get hold of him.

But, by the time I'd got to the first landing, if one can call it so, for it was half a greenhouse and half a gallery looking down into the hall, I'd changed my mind about the three or four. The band was playing a waltz that made my

toes tingle, and the flowers all round were breathing their sweetest, when I felt—Gone. There's nothing else to say. When a man's in love, he's in love—and if you can find another word to say about it you're a bigger poet than the world has known so far. Love isn't words. And it's not much good trying to say what she was like, there when I first set eyes on her, for ten to one you're in love with somebody else and won't agree with me that she was just the loveliest girl that ever was born. But she was, all the same: and that's the only point on which I'm not open to argue. She was just as fair as an angel, and precisely the height and size of one; and she was about the age that angels are when they're eighteen, or maybe a little more. It's true that I'd just come from where angels, of that sort, are rare; and before that evening I'd never mixed much with them anywhere; so that falling in love at first sight might be a trifle more easy and natural to me than to landsmen in general. But that's neither here nor there. It wasn't so much the beauty that caught me, nor her look of a real lady, as something in her face which I'd never yet seen so plainly in any woman's. For all her beautiful fairness she had eyes which might have been the twins of Paul's for depth and darkness—only his never seemed to say anything, but only to go through yourself, while hers looked just like the very gates of Fairyland. And, just now, it seemed to be a sad story they were telling. All the people round were talking and laughing twenty-five to the dozen, or else whispering here and there; but she was standing up all alone under some tall ferns, silent and lost in herself, and yet seeming to be looking out, all over the place, for somebody who didn't seem to be there. She

wasn't looking at me, anyhow; so I could watch her at my ease, and I did too, wondering if there was any way I could help her in, for she just looked like that; as if she wanted a man's help in something, and as if, among all Miles's company, there wasn't one to hold her out a straw to cling to. Every now and then I could see her press her teeth into her lower lip, and move her foot in quicker time than the music went to; and it was all out of impatience, for she looked too sad and anxious for anger. I didn't know her name, and I hadn't seen her five minutes, and yet I caught myself out in an uncomfortable wonder if the somebody who hadn't come was young, and a man—say one of Miles's military friends. No wonder he had lots of friends about him if this girl belonged to Mrs. Cregan. At last I got so full of the notion that I began to feel like a fool and half like a spy; and as I didn't like that sensation, I made my way to the door of a big drawing-room where I'd found out that Miles's wife was receiving the guests as they came in. I hadn't caught sight of Miles yet; but to look for a little man like him in such a crowd, all scattered about through a dozen rooms, was worse than looking for a needle in a bottle of hay.

Even with poor Kate fresh in my mind (so far as the girl on the stairs hadn't put her out again) I couldn't but own that Miles had gone more above himself in his second match than if he'd married another Connor. It was just amazing how such a lady could have taken up with a tailor-looking attorney like Miles; but it's always hard for men to make out what women see in other men, barring themselves. If you'll realise your ideal of what a princess ought to be, but isn't always, you'll

have a better picture of Mrs. Cregan than I can give you; and as to her style and her manner, she might be a queen. It just took my breath away. She wasn't young, but she was as handsome a woman of forty as I'd ever seen, with eyes and the nose of an eagle, and the smile of a summer-day. However, I went up to her, and made a bow as if I'd been at court, and said, as well as the moving crowd round her would let me,

'I'm afraid I'm late, but 'tis never too late to find the way into Paradise. Do you happen to know where I'll find my brother-in-law?'

I had not meant my second sentence to be quite so sudden, but a dozen people were wanting to speak to her all at once, so I had to put my question and my self-introduction into one and the same quick word. I thought she looked half puzzled for just the tithe of a second, but she gave me a fresh smile all to myself, and put out her hand, which I took warmly, and said,

'I am very glad to see you indeed—late or early. No; I have not seen your brother-in-law for some little while. I hope—'

I don't know what else she was going to say, for just then somebody else came up, and then a second, and then a third, for there were later comers even than I; so I was obliged to give up the chance of a chat just then, and maybe an introduction to the girl on the stairs, and move on to look for Miles, wondering more and more at the way he was living now. I half wished—my ancestors forgive me!—that I myself had been bred an attorney. I felt a sort of fascination drawing me back to the ferns on the stairs; but I fought against it hard, and looked about honestly for Miles.

'Excuse me,' said a gentleman

in spectacles with whom I chanced to rub elbows, 'I am very near-sighted. Can you tell me where our hostess happens to be just now?'

'My sister-in-law?' said I, feeling proud of Mrs. Cregan; and so might any man. 'She's there—just inside that door.'

'Ah, you are her brother-in-law? It's rather an informal way of opening an acquaintance, but I'm exceedingly glad to have made it. I daresay you have often heard her speak of her old friend, Lord Verner? I am he. How is it we have never met before? But ah, I remember—you have been abroad for a long while, haven't you?'

'Yes,' said I. 'About ten years.'

'That accounts for it, then. I did not know your brother before he married Lady Anne. You are in the army, aren't you?'

Think of Miles Cregan being married to a Lady Anne! Of course Miles wasn't my brother, but there was no occasion just then to bother a stranger with the exact relation of the Cregans to the Connors; and I wasn't proud enough of it, for that matter, to take the trouble. And moreover it wasn't becoming in me to lessen the grandeur of Miles and his house by saying that their kinsman had been an ostrich-farmer at the Cape, and a river-side porter in Brooklyn, and even queerer things than that now and then, when the devil drove specially hard. So I said,

'No, I'm not in the army. I've been in India,' which was true. And maybe I'd have given him the tiger story if somebody else hadn't interrupted—for I noticed it was a queer fashion among Miles's friends never to talk more than half a minute at a time to any one, which didn't seem sociable to my

mind, and spoiled conversation. But I thought to myself, 'If I get introduced to that girl among the ferns, it isn't only half a minute that I'll be!'

Only how was that to be done? Somehow, of course—for it isn't likely that a man who's fallen in love as I'd done won't find out some sort of a way. 'I *must* find Miles,' thought I, 'and I will.' But man proposes—the way in which I did get introduced to that girl is perhaps the most extraordinary occurrence in the whole history of fiction. I've even met with people who wouldn't believe it till I'd given them my word for its being true, and shown them the fact of it with their own eyes.

On my way after Miles, I went back to the stairs, half afraid for fear I'd see her eyes alight with talking to that other fellow who hadn't come. But she wasn't there any more—which made it the worse, if anything, because when you don't see a girl it is impossible to know what she's up to. Just as I was standing in the very spot where she'd stood, to keep it sacred from common heels, and was thinking how to steal the bit of fern that might have touched her neck or her arm—for I was just as gone as a man could be—a man in a livery came up to me, and gave me a twisted-up little note on a silver salver, without a bit of a direction on it anywhere.

'Is it for me?' asked I—for who was likely to send me a note to Miles Cregan's?

'Yes, sorr!' said the footman—and I was ready to shake hands with him for the sake of the brogue. So not even Miles, in all his grandeur, had forgotten that an Irishman ought to have Irishinen about him. Maybe the note was from Miles, to tell me where I'd find him.

It was a mere scrawl with a pencil—'I must speak to you instantly. Follow the bearer.' And then came a worse scrawl for a signature, which after a bit of bother I made out to be 'Grapes,' or 'Grace,' or 'Gravy,' or 'Graves.' Graves?—Ah, of course, the jeweller; confound the man for meddling in other people's affairs! No doubt he'd been to Scotland Yard, and brought me some cock-and-bull story about the stone. But still it had been good-natured of the man; and if he'd come for my sake all the way to Melton-street, it wouldn't do to send him off without so much as a thank you or getting my sister-in-law to give him a glass of champagne for his pains.

'Is he down-stairs?' asked I.

'Yes, sorr!' said the footman.

'I'll come then,' said I.

I followed him down-stairs, and he got me my hat out of a heap of others, and then led me to the street-door. 'We'd better manners,' thought I, 'in Dublin than not to ask even a tradesman to sit down in the hall while he's waiting.' But I hadn't the time to think much when my fellow-countryman gave a whistle, and a carriage-door flew open, and after an 'All right, your honour!' and a sudden shove from behind that forced me to put my foot forward to keep me from falling, I found myself half down the street, sitting in a close carriage, and with a girl's face against my chest, and both her arms round me as tight and as trembling as could be. Before I could make up my mind whether my head was straight on my shoulders, we passed a gas-lamp; and the flash showed me the face of the very girl I'd lost my heart to, under the fern!

'O Tom!' she began, in a voice full of tears, but as tender and as sweet as a dream of her own eyes. But I hadn't got her a hair's

breadth closer to my heart when another gas-flash made her fly back as if I'd stabbed her, and she fell and crouched into her corner of the carriage, and looked at me as if she was too terrified to scream. 'Good God!' she moaned out at last, 'what have I done?—what will become of me now? Who are *you*? For pity's sake stop the carriage, whoever you are! Who are you, who have *dared*—'

Now I'll ask any man of the world what he's to say or do when the loveliest girl on earth first embraces him and calls him by his own short name, and then the next minute asks him how he dares run off with her—when it's she who is running off with him? I don't think there's many a man who, when she told him to stop the carriage, would take her at her word. I'd never had much to do with young women, having been mostly out of the way of them; but I'd not lived to two-and-thirty without learning some of the little ways that belong to the best of them. When a woman runs off with a man, it stands to nature that she'd take a little trouble to make things seem as if it was the other way round. And though, thank God, I've a pretty clear conscience about everything, still I wasn't christened Joseph, but Tom—and I'm not ashamed of that same.

So I didn't try to stop the carriage all at once; but I said all I could to soothe her and comfort her, and to make it an understood thing that the elopement was all my own doing, and not hers at all, and that my shoulders were broad enough to bear any trouble that might come to her. I can't repeat all I said, because one's talk in such cases is apt to get broken, and because I can't exactly recall all that I did say; but I felt an unknown eloquence come into me as I assured her of my love at first

sight, and of the lifelong devotion I would give her as the smallest return for the sacrifice she had made for me. So much did I say, before I even put out my hand to feel for hers, that she had no chance of getting in a word; for the impulse carried me on, and I didn't stop once to think what was the meaning of it all. And faith, I wouldn't think much of a man who'd stop to cross-examine the loveliest girl in the world, though he doesn't know her name even, and though her behaviour may not seem entirely the type of propriety. Maybe we Connors would have been the richer for being unlike ourselves; but there are times when gentlemen must chance things a little.

But even a man of the world may now and then be wrong, and that just because he is a man of the world.

No sooner did I touch her hand than she dashed down the window, and called to the driver to stop instantly. What was I to think of it when the fellow heeded her no more than if he'd been deaf, and when the more she called 'Stop!' the faster he made the horses go—for there were two of them? He'd had his orders, I supposed; and somebody must have given them to him, and it hadn't been I. At last she sank back in despair.

'Sir,' she said, in a slow low voice that made every tone thrill through me, 'you are at least a man, though you can be no gentleman. I don't know how or why you have taken this cruel advantage of me. I suppose you have bribed the coachman. But I tell you this,' she said, putting her arm through the window, 'that if you do not instantly leave me I will open the door and throw myself out into the road. What can you want with me, who never saw you in my life before?'

'On my honour,' said I, 'I have bribed nobody. For Heaven's sake don't open the door! Why should you be afraid of a man who—who'd give his life to serve you?'

'I am not afraid,' she said, with a sort of quiet scorn.

I don't know what else there was in the tone, but it made me feel as if there'd been some horrible mistake somewhere; and it also made me feel that when she talked of throwing herself out she was not making believe.

'Madam,' said I, 'will you believe me when I tell you that, as for taking advantage of a woman, it isn't in me; and that until I saw you this night I'd no more thought of running away with a lady than I know now how it's come to pass that I'm doing so? I can't retract what I've said about being in love with you, for it's true; and sure any man may love any woman? But beyond wanting to be introduced to you, I'd no more plans than a baby; and I'd shoot myself sooner than make you afraid. If you don't know who I am, my name's Thomas Connor, brother of Miles Cregan's first wife; and I no more expected to meet you at his house to-night than—'

I've always noticed that when a man's telling the truth people mostly believe him—well nigh as often as when he's telling them lies. Any way, some of the scorn was out of her voice when she said, though as if her thoughts were far off,

'Who is Miles Cregan?'

'Miles Cregan? Why sure you know—'

'I never heard of him.'

'And yet you've been at his house to-night—'

'Sir, I never heard the name! Stop the carriage this instant!' she said, as if she was a real empress, 'and quit it yourself, and order the man to drive me back instantly to

where you—you intruded upon me. Instantly, sir, if you please, if you are even so much as a man!'

'To where I—I found you? But that is Miles Cregan's,' said I.

'You know as well as I do that it is the Earl of Hexham's,' said she.

'Do you mean to tell me they've made Miles Cregan an earl? No, I can't believe that anyhow, though there's nothing else on earth you can tell me that I'll not believe—no, not even if you tell me I'm not dreaming.'

'Will you stop the carriage, or will you not?' asked she.

I just looked at her face. There was no answering that, anyhow, but in one way.

'I will,' said I; 'and Heaven forgive me if I've given you one minute's distress; for Heaven only knows how it's been done.' I stretched myself out of the window, and caught hold of the driver's near arm. 'Stop, you thief,' I holloed, 'if you don't want to be pitched over!'

'All right, sir, I know!' and he made the horses gallop again.

I was throwing the door on my own side open, in order to swing myself round to the box and seize the reins, when the girl laid her hand on my arm.

'Heaven help us all! The man won't stop for you—no, nor for me!'

'Won't he though! We'll see that, anyhow. I'll take the reins myself, and drive you back to the Earl of Cregan's faster than we came—on my honour I will. Can I do nothing to make you undoubt me? It's some awful mistake; but how it began—'

'And—where are we now?'

I looked out; we were racing past trees and hedgerows. There was just light enough to see so much by. But for the rest, we might be at the sources of the Nile

for aught I knew to the contrary. And I told her so.

'I must get on the box, and make this deaf fool of a coachman drive us back himself; for I'm lost in the bush myself,' said I.

'It would be mad. The house would be closed. I—I am a governess there. We are on the road to Walthamstow. Do me one favour, sir: leave the carriage yourself, and let me drive on. Whatever the mistake is, whoever you have taken me for, a night's walk will not harm you much, and I shall thank you to my dying day. But O!' she cried out, as all her calmness broke down into a storm of tears—'O Tom, my brother, what will *you* do—where are *you*! Too late—always, always!'

My head wasn't of much use just then for want of knowledge; but my heart was just breaking to help her, if I could only guess how. She was right enough in one thing: it wouldn't do for anybody's governess, lord's or no lord's, to be caught or found out eloping with a young man. The world would hardly be so green as to believe that they didn't even know one another's name. The world's too clever by half; and that's why it's so often taken in. As for how Miles Cregan could have turned into an earl, that question didn't trouble my wits just then. If I could only help the governess, he might be a duke if he pleased, and I wouldn't bother my brains about the matter.

'I'll do just whatever you ask me,' said I. 'I'll even let you go on to your journey's end all alone, if that's the only way I can help you. I believe that confounded Irish flunkey mistook me for somebody else after all. I suppose your brother's in some sort of trouble, and for your sake I'd like to help him. Mayn't I even know your name?'

'Grace Brand. I mean—'

I remember her words that night a long way better than I do my own; and I remember how quickly she told me her name without thinking, and how hurt I was by her trying to untell it again.

'It's safe with me,' said I, keeping the widest space I could between myself and her. 'If I ever breathe a letter of it I'll give your brother Tom the satisfaction of a gentleman. Is there nothing I can do for you, but to say Good-bye?'

'Nothing,' she said, in the saddest voice I ever heard. 'You have done a cruel thing, but I think—I'm sure you never meant it—and so—good-bye.'

She held out her hand to me, and I just touched it, for all my heart was gone after my wits, and that was out of me, and was going to swing myself out into the road, when all of a sudden the horses came to a dead stand as if of their own accord.

But my foot was hardly on the road when I found out why. We'd been pulled up by four constables—one was on the box by the driver, one was at the horses, one was turning a bull's-eye on us all, and the fourth had a hand on my shoulder. I looked for a minute at Grace: she sat as quiet as death, and as dumb.

Well, they could do nothing to me. But there was Grace—and whatever the matter was, there must never be a shadow of a guess, if it could be helped by a legion of lies, that a girl, whose character's her bread and her life, had been caught at midnight running away with a man. The stars be praised that she'd told me her name! The way I'd get her out of the scrape I'd got her into came on me like an inspiration.

'What is it?' said I, as coolly as if I'd been cool, instead of being bewildered out of my seven senses.

'Can't a gentleman drive with his own sister to Walthamstow in the early morning without being stopped by a parcel of constables as if they were highwaymen?'

'Come, Mr. Brand, you know what we're after, and of course we're as sorry as you can be. There's no need to talk before the young lady; and there's no need to detain *her*. If you hadn't tried to give us the slip by getting out of the carriage you might have gone on quietly to Walthamstow, and there'd have been this bother saved. We've got a trap just behind, and the young lady'—he touched his hat to Grace—'can go on.'

'If I did know what you're after,' said I, 'perhaps I'd agree with you.'

'Which case? Why it's diamonds this time—Lady Horchester's—and I'm afraid, sir, we must ask you to let the young lady go on at once, and let us search you here. Diamonds are things that can be made away with any minute, you know.'

'You may search and welcome,' said I. 'And if I've got the ghost of a diamond about me, my name's not Thomas Brand. There—I'll search myself if you please.'

I'd got two reputations to take care of—the brother's for the sister's sake, and the sister's for her own. In a minute I turned out all my pockets before they could interfere, just as I'd done at the jeweller's. Something or other fell out of one; and the policeman with the bull's eye made a dart at it as soon as it touched the road.

'That won't do, sir!' said he, giving it to the sergeant. 'And by the Lord Harry,' he cries out, 'if here isn't the very identical stone that Graves of Cheapside was in Scotland Yard about on Saturday afternoon—gold setting, green leather case, and all! Fifty pounds' reward! It's not my fault,

sir,' he said to me. 'Duty's duty, and—' he said, measuring my six feet of height and forty inches of chest with his eye—'you'll excuse me;' and I was pretty soon in another sort of carriage, with handcuffs on my wrists, and in my mind, for a last memory of Grace, an odd look that I hadn't the heart to think could be meant for a smile. But it looked bitterly like one all the same—after my trying to help her.

Of course I'd shifted the case into my new dress-coat when I went to the Opera, and of course, when I put on my shooting-coat next morning, I never thought of its being anywhere but where it had been ever since I left Cape Town. It had just gone where all the lost letters go.

But that didn't keep my situation from being an unpleasant one. The handcuffs weren't comfortable, and it was difficult to form any sort of a plan in the position where I found myself without knowing the bearings of anything. Only one thing was quite clear, as I hope every gentleman will admit, that I was bound to brazen things out, and, having done another man the honour of taking the responsibility of his behaviour on my own shoulders, to do as I'd be done by; for if anybody, under press of circumstances, felt obliged to call himself Thomas Connor, I'd like him to do credit to the name. And as for Grace, the fact that a woman doesn't treat a man well doesn't make him the less bound to take care of her good name at any cost to his own; it makes him all the more bound, it seems to me. And as that was the one clear thing I had before me, I held my tongue, for fear of letting the constables get an inkling that they'd got hold of a wrong man again.

I slept the rest of that night in a cell at a police-station—for the first time since I'd been run in at Dublin for having been accidentally present at a row; and I slept very well, for I was dead tired. Early the next morning I was told that there was a solicitor who wanted to see me.

'Is his name Cregan?' asked I; for if it had been I wouldn't have seen him, for then the murder would have been out that it wasn't her brother with whom Grace had been caught running away. But it wasn't Miles; it was quite a young man, dressed to the nines, of the name of Fry. As I'd never heard of the man, I had no objection to see him.

He shook hands with me in the most cordial manner; but I was on my guard against pumping, and put on a stand-off sort of way, waiting to get the pumping on my own side.

'My name's Albert Fry,' said he. 'I suppose you expected to see my father; but he's too old now to attend to business much, and I'm just as much in his lordship's confidence as he used to be. I saw his lordship this morning. In fact I've just come from him.'

'I'm much obliged to you for coming. And what does his lordship say?' asked I.

'Excuse me for saying so, Mr. Brand, but you *are* a cool hand!'

'Pretty well for that,' said I; and so I was, if a fever's cool. 'The hotter things are, Mr. Fry, the more one's bound to keep cool.'

'It's a bad business this time—a very bad business indeed. I don't know what's to be done. You were asking me what his lordship said. It's no good mincing matters.'

'Not a bit of it,' said I.

'And so I'm bound to tell you that his lordship has determined, as he puts it, to wash his hands of

you once for all. And so he has instructed me to say.'

'Then tell his lordship that if he wants to wash his hands he had better go to Bath,' said I; for such a message as that made me feel warm.

'Pardon me, Mr. Brand, but this is no joking matter. Such a family scandal as this would be fatal. He refuses to see you or to communicate with you; and, under the circumstances, that is natural; indeed it is unavoidable. But, for the sake of the family, on my earnest representations, he has consented to make you a proposition. Or rather two propositions; for they are alternative.'

'There's no harm in hearing what they are, anyhow,' said I.

'The first is that you should obtain bail, to be repaid by his lordship for your flight,' said he. 'He is willing to pay as much as two thousand pounds for the family honour.'

'And it's kind of him; and I'm glad to know the exact price of the family honour,' said I, 'in case I'm inclined to bid for it some day. And what's number two?'

'The second alternative is that you should plead guilty under an *alias*,' said he, 'so that the family name mayn't suffer; and when you've served out your time, his lordship will allow you three hundred a year, paid quarterly, so long as you're never heard of again; for if you are he'll let you go to the devil, were his lordship's very words.'

'Guilty to what?' asked I.

'Come, Mr. Brand, I am your legal adviser as well as my lord's; you must have no secrets from me. But perhaps you mean to which of the cases? I don't mean Lady Horchester's jewels. There would be no fear of a hostile prosecution in that quarter if that was the only matter. But it is this new busi-

ness—that's where the trouble comes.'

'But why not plead not guilty to everything?'

'Think of the evidence, Mr. Brand.'

'I'd rather you'd tell me the evidence yourself, if you please.'

'The police have been on the traces of Lady Horchester's jewels for a year. They have reason—they're not bound to say how or why—to suspect you. You leave the country suddenly: they trace you to Africa. Can you prove that you did not leave the country suddenly, and have not been in South Africa?'

'Faith, I can't do that,' said I. 'But—'

'Very well. With the help of the authorities at the Cape, they find you at last farming ostriches up the country, in company with a person named Connor. You were on the point of being arrested, when, as if you had some suspicion of the intentions of the police, you suddenly went away; and were lost until you were traced to the diamond fields, still in partnership with Connor, whom the police at first suspected of being your accomplice, but whom they now believe to have been your tool—that is of course how they put it, not I. Once more you disappeared when on the point of arrest—'

'For God's sake, don't tell me you're talking of Paul Andrews! I said, for he had been my friend, and I'd believed in him.'

'You see,' said he quietly, 'what would happen if you plead not guilty. I hadn't mentioned the name you went by, and you blurt it out in a way that would make the jury find you guilty without turning round. That was the name. And then they lost the track altogether for a time, when they heard of you in London, living as if the whole thing had blown

over; but meanwhile they had got their whole case together, and were going to take you into custody on your way home last night from Lord Hexham's, when you almost gave them the slip again. It is a thousand pities, Mr. Brand, that you were taken in the act of trying to escape from the carriage while it was going at full speed, and that you tried to get rid of what you had in your pockets before you were searched officially. You will have to be tried for stealing, not Lady Horchester's jewels, but Mr. Connor's. Your knowledge of his possession of it is beyond legal question, for you were in his company the very day when it was found. You and he were at the Opera on the same evening. You have had financial dealings with his brother-in-law, Cregan—who, between ourselves, is the most outrageous old Shylock that ever made a hundred pounds by lending ten. The diamond was lost, strangely and mysteriously. Information of the loss was at once given to the police by Mr. Graves, the jeweller; and four days afterwards it was found upon you. Believe me, Mr. Brand, you must have a very strong story indeed to account for the lawful possession of that stone—and then, how will Lord Horchester himself be able to keep back the rest of the scandal? Of what nature would your defence be?'

I was thinking of Grace, and of Paul, and I was wondering.

'My defence? Pooh! I'll call Mr. Connor himself,' said I. 'He'll make it as clear as day to you. You'll find him at once, if you'll go to his lodgings in Norfolk-street, Strand. And he'll tell you—'

What was I saying? I stopped short, flushing up to my hair—the truth is, there was such a case against me that I'd clean forgotten

for the minute whether I was myself or no.

‘What will he tell me?’ said the lawyer.

‘I’m thinking that perhaps you won’t find him in Norfolk-street, after all,’ said I. ‘He was there, but he had business in Ireland—’

‘So he told Graves. You see how much better informed you are about his lodging and his movements than even the detectives supposed. But what would he say, if he could be found?’

‘On second thoughts, I’m thinking he’d say nothing,’ said I, beginning to feel I’d got into a real mess at last, but not able to see my way out of it without harming Grace anyhow.

‘Then he must be kept out of the way, and you must plead guilty—if you can’t get bail. Can you get bail?’

‘Would you be one yourself?’ asked I.

‘That would not do at all. It is essential that no name in the remotest way connected with the family should appear. Cregan, rascal as he is, might do.’

‘Heaven forbid!’ said I, for he’d identify me; and so for that matter would anybody. So I said, ‘No; I can’t get bail—and I won’t, either.’

‘Then we must contrive an alias for you, and you must plead guilty,’ said he. ‘After all, it will be the best way—there won’t be a bit of scandal, and you’ll get a ticket-of-leave in no time, and then you’ll have a safe three hundred a year for the rest of your days. May I take it as a settled thing?’

Well, it did seem hard, that just because I’d put on a dress-coat to go to the Opera, I should have to plead guilty to a theft, and maybe get sent into penal servitude for five years or more. But, once more, I put it to every Irish or English gentleman, what else could I do?

Penal servitude isn’t a thing to be jumped at, whether one deserves it or no; but ’tis surely a joke to a man beside the loss to a girl of her good name. And, try as I would, I couldn’t manage to make myself the brute-beast and the mean cad that I’d have been if I’d run the least chance of having it thought that Grace had been caught running away at night with anybody but her own brother. All the same, I won’t pretend that I mightn’t have found it easier to make a cad of myself if I hadn’t just learned that my best friend was a blackguard, and if poor Kate hadn’t been dead and left me all alone in the world—or if that last look of Grace had left me anything to look for. I couldn’t manage to care much about myself just then, and there was nobody else for me to care for between the sky and the fields. I didn’t even think when I answered him.

‘Yes,’ said I, ‘that’s settled, and the sooner the better. So I’ll wish you good-morning, Mr. Fry; and if there’s any trifling thing I want done, I daresay you’ll be good enough not to mind doing it for me.’ I held out my hand and he took it, thief as I was; and I felt more grateful to him than I had any need to be, for it’s a fact that I hadn’t shaken a man’s hand in kindness since I’d left Africa.

‘That’s right,’ said he. ‘You’ve saved the Family Honour: and as to the three hundred a year—’

‘You shall not pay it to me!’ said I, in a rage. ‘I won’t touch a penny of it—if his lordship thinks honour’s worth two thousand pounds, I don’t think it’s to be paid for in diamonds!’ said I. You see just at that minute Paul’s honour, blackguard as he’d been, was my own.

Mr. Fry stared: but he didn’t say anything more that was worth saying, and left me alone. But

I'd been that for a long time now, and was likely to be for a longer; so, as I'd had but a short night, I turned round on the bench and went to sleep again. And what else was there to do?

IV.

I DON'T know much about the laws of England, or how long it's usual to keep a prisoner before taking him before a magistrate, or whether there's any practical difference about the rules when great people get mixed up in such matters. Nor do I know how long I slept on that bench, waiting for what was next to happen. I might seem to be taking things easy; but I wasn't, at all. When I woke up it seemed to be from a bad dream, in which I was everybody in the world but one, and that was myself, while myself was everybody in the world but me. I fancied the door was opened once, and if I didn't swear out loud I dreamed that I did, pretty forcibly—or somebody else did, in a way that was very much my own.

Any way, when I woke up I hadn't yet been to Bow-street, and, to judge from the light, I wasn't likely to be there that day. It was a bad, dark, ugly afternoon, which seemed to have been made expressly to fit me, and there was a fog in the cell though it was July. I was getting hungry, too; and I wasn't sorry to hear the door open again.

'I wish it wasn't against the rules to light a pipe,' I said. 'I'll have time enough to learn to do without, in five years.'

However, when I looked it wasn't a policeman I'd spoken to. It was one of the finest-looking fellows I'd ever set eyes on since I left Dublin—as tall as myself, and though perhaps not quite so broad as myself about the chest

and shoulders, still bigger than most men are. I'd have been proud to try a fall with him, and I wouldn't have backed myself to win or lose. But it wasn't there his strength seemed to be. He looked about fifty years old, and every one of the fifty looked as if it had come like new strength to him; it would have been easier for a weak man, I should say, to meet his arm than for a false man to meet his eyes. And he seemed to bear himself as you'd think a general would on a field of battle—quite easy, but not taking things less gravely than they need. I stood up as he came in, and we looked straight at one another.

'Who are you?' asked he.

'My name is Thomas Brand,' said I.

'The same who—who has lived in Africa, under the name of Paul Andrews?'

'The same.'

In spite of his eyes, I looked into them as much like brass as if I wasn't telling a lie.

'And you say you are brother to the young lady with whom you were driving to Walthamstow? Are you aware that such an assertion is condemning you certainly to imprisonment for theft, probably to penal servitude?'

He said the words hardly and sternly.

'I don't know what right you have to cross-examine a prisoner in private,' said I; 'but I do say so, if it condemned me to be hanged,' added I, for there was no going back now, and I wasn't going to be bullied by any man.

'Do you own this young Irish gentleman for a brother, Grace?' asked he, half turning round.

My heart gave a great leap in me as I saw that Grace was there too; but I tried to keep myself calm, and made all the signs I could to her to own me and stand

up for her own good name. For to have gone through all this for nothing would have been too hard, not to speak of the waste of it all. We Connors have wasted enough without wasting anything more.

'I thank you with all my heart, Mr. Connor,' said she, looking at me as she'd never looked yet, and God bless her for every look she ever gave me! 'And how shall I thank you enough, or get you to forgive me for—'

I could hear the tears coming before they came; but they weren't like the last tears I'd seen in her—these were more content and quiet—and she tried to go on:

'For having left you last night to—'

But she couldn't go on, after all; and oh, if I could only have had her as near me as last night, I think I'd have known what to do.

'Mr. Connor,' said the gentleman, striking in to save her from trying to speak while she was crying, 'I believe Grace; and, without the least grain of offence, I do not believe you. What reason you can have had for trying to serve a family of whom you know nothing is past my guessing, as much as it is past my gratitude; but, since you have tried, you will be glad to hear that, thanks to your throwing the constables off the traces, the unfortunate young man whom you befriended has been able to leave the country once more—never, I trust, to return. No, Grace, never; and it is best so, and you know it as well as I.'

Was it a trap that was being laid for me?

'Then I assure you,' said I, 'that you owe me no gratitude in life, for I had not the least intention of befriending anybody at all. You say that my name's Connor, and that I'm an Irishman, and you have no more reason for saying either

than for being grateful. If I like the name Brand better, I've a right to take it; and if I have a fancy for being in penal servitude, it's nothing to anybody but me. Perhaps you'll tell me first of all why you take me for an Irishman, and why you think my name isn't Brand? It can't be the accent, for I've got no accent at all of any sort, not even an English one.'

And that was true; for though many people say that I've never forgotten Dublin in my speech, who should know better than a Dublin man that Dublin is the only place in the world that has the distinction of having no accent at all?

'I will tell you,' said he, very gravely, 'why I knew you not to be Thomas Brand. *He* would not have refused three hundred a year with scorn. It was Mr. Fry's telling me this that brought me here, for fear lest some strange and terrible injustice should be done.'

'I don't see why a man should want to sell his soul for three hundred pounds,' said I, and I didn't see it then; though since I've been older I've learned that it isn't quite such an unheard-of thing. 'Anyhow, perhaps you will let me know who it is I'm speaking to.'

'I am the Marquis of Horchester.'

'Thank you, my lord,' I said, 'for letting me understand that much anyhow. Not that it makes things much more plain.'

'When this foolish child,' said he, 'heard that her brother was in danger of arrest, instead of trusting to me to see him safe from the worst, if only for his name's sake, she laid an absurd plan for carrying him off by night into hiding, with some yet sillier friends of hers at Walthamstow, as if we lived in the Middle Ages. Grace, it is only due to Mr. Connor that it should be explained. The coachman,

whom she had to take into her confidence, served her so well that when he found the carriage pursued, he— But why should I tell you any more of this miserable story, miserable enough at its best, when you must now understand it as well as I? Grace has told me of your eagerness to redeem your mistake, when you found you had made one—of your honourable attempt to shield her, when nothing else was left for you to do. Can you forgive her for her silence, when she found that your chivalry was giving her brother time and misleading the officers? And what can I do for you in return?"

What would he have said, I wondered, if she had told him all the things I'd said to her before I'd found out I was making any mistake at all? I coloured up when I thought of them; and somehow, without looking, I knew that she was colouring too.

'She was quite right to hold her tongue,' said I; 'for that's all I wanted; and if her brother's clear off—and I'm glad of it, for he's a better fellow than you might take him for,'—I'm glad I said that, for the look it bought me,— 'there's nothing more to be done. No, thank you, my lord. There's nothing you can do for me; and I don't like selling things of that kind. But there's one thing I'll ask you to do; and that is, never to let that night's ride harm the young lady. There's been enough of mistakes and false pretences; and I don't want you to think that I've been trying to get into penal servitude for your name's sake, my lord; for which it isn't likely I'd care much, seeing I don't know it, or even for her brother's, though, as it turns out now, he was once a friend of my own. So there's no call for talking of being grateful. If there's the least chance of her being the worse off for last night's

drive, I'd like her to remember all I said to her at the first; and that it's truer now than it was then; and that, now her brother's gone, she'll never need to feel alone as long as I live,' said I—for she'd told me herself of her being a governess; and I didn't want her to feel even for a minute, in the very middle of her troubles, that there wasn't somebody in the world who was enough in love with her to go to the gallows for her if need were. It mayn't have been the most convenient time or way of saying so; but I'd already told her I loved her the first minute I saw her among the ferns; and I felt that if it wasn't Now it might be Never.

'Mr. Connor,' said Lord Horchester, 'Mr. Fry told me that you are a cool hand—and I think you are. When I asked you what I could do for you, I scarcely thought you would have made my offer include the hand of my niece, Lady Grace Brand.'

I *had* put my foot in it at last! But I've always observed that when one foot's in, the only way of getting it out again is to put in the other.

'My lord,' said I, 'Lady Grace will tell you herself that I thought her the governess; and if her being anybody else stands in the way of my doing my best to win her if she'll let me try, I'm sorry I thought wrong. But for the rest I'm afraid it wouldn't have made any difference to me if I *had* known; for it isn't my fault that she's the bravest and loyallest as well as the most beautiful girl in the world—and as I'd say that of her behind her back, why, of course, I must say it to her face too. I'd say it of her if only for trying to help poor Paul in that very way—it wasn't a cold-hearted or half-hearted way, anyhow. And so I can't go back on my own words. I only

ask for time, my lord. And as to myself, I make no doubt that the Brands are a fine old Saxon family; but I've yet to learn that a Connor, with the blood of kings in his veins—'

'Of course—of course,' said he, naturally accepting an argument which indeed there was no answering. 'But I think that it is I and Lady Grace herself who have need to ask for time, if you will kindly allow us a little. As soon as you are released call upon me, and we will consider what else there is I can do for you—whatever is to be, you have done for us more than we can ever quite repay.'

I had not; but I've never been able to convince them to the contrary. At that minute I was being repaid ten thousand times over.

'Thank you,' said Grace, putting out her hand, 'for the sake of my brother—your friend—'

'And not the least for your own?' asked I.

But she didn't answer me just then.

She did afterwards, though. She is Lady Grace Connor now; and I won her fairly, though it took me some time. People may call me an Adventurer, who married for rank and money and all that; but I know better, and so does she. And that's why I'm proud of being an Adventurer: and good reason why.

I don't know that my love-story has much of a moral. But you may learn two things from it, both worth knowing. One is, always feel in all your pockets when you change your clothes. The other is, when you give an evening party be quite sure that you know who your guests are; and don't, like my wife's elder sister, Lady Hexham, think you're bound to know a man because he seems to know you. It's easy enough for an Adventurer in a dress-coat to walk in anywhere; and if he doesn't, like me, steal your daughters or your sisters, he may steal your spoons.

FLOATING FLOWERS.

'Twas long ago in summer-time
I sat by the sparkling sea,
And the waves rolled on in their restless chime,
And sang their sweet songs to me.
Idly I watched those wavelets break
On the cold gray stones of the pier,
And idly I mused on life and love,
Not knowing that Fate drew near.

And little I recked what those songs might mean,
That sounded so blithe and gay,
As they flooded the air from the depths so green,
In that sweet yet solemn day.
And after long years the sunlight gleams
As bright as it gleamed long ago ;
And the waters that sang of my happy dreams
Now relentlessly sing of my woe.

I cast a fair flower on the waves that day,
And watched it float off with the tide ;
I cast it in faith that it still would stay
On the waters at my side.
But a whirlpool caught it, and down it sank,
Never again to rise ;
And a faded leaf from the shadowing bank
Is all that now meets my eyes.

And, alas. 'twas my youth and my fond heart's love
That I cast that day on the tide,
And my hope was firm in a Power above,
And I cared not for aught beside.
Now nothing remains but that leaflet sear
To speak of the bliss long gone by ;
Yet I hold in my heart its memory dear,
Which will blossom eternally.

M. C. P.

THE SULPHUR-PEAK OF GUADALOUPE.

ALTHOUGH not a member of any Alpine club, in one respect I am in the fashion, being bitten by an irresistible mania for climbing, and unable to come across a mole-hill without mounting on the top of it. Unfortunately, being by profession a sailor, the greater part of my life is spent, in the society of gulls and albatrosses, at an elevation only a few feet above the level of the sea. The keener therefore is the enjoyment when an opportunity occurs of attempting to reach the skies, of visiting the lordly eagle, and leaving my card with the absent condor.

What numbers of mountains I have seen, but only at a distance, wrapped in their brilliant mantles of snow, from the Sneefeeld Jokül of Iceland to the magnificent Sarmiento, whose glaciers creep down till they bathe in the waters of Magellan's Straits! Objects of ever unsatisfied desires, their image is engraved none the less deeply on my memory.

It was in this habitual frame of mind that, one fine February evening, I was drawing near to Guadeloupe. A light breeze wafted us gently along, and the beauty of the night kept every one on deck. The stars glittered in a deep-blue sky, against which stood out in dark relief the thousand notches of the Sulphur-Peak, the volcano which crowns the summit of the island. A young native of La Pointe-à-Pitre was giving us a vivid picture of the innumerable beauties of the mountain, and of the equally innumerable dangers which there await the inexperienced traveller. His flowery language and appro-

priate gestures had taken his audience by storm, when the unlucky idea came into my head to ask him how many times he had ascended the mountain and beheld its marvels. He had never once been up to the top! My question extinguished his eloquence, and he took himself off immediately afterwards to bed. But his description, though founded on imagination and hearsay, gave me a strong desire to ascend the Peak, and I persuaded three of my comrades to share the adventure. When the bargain was struck, we cast a last look on the lofty volcano, which now reflected the rays of the rising moon, and everybody retired to rest.

On awakening in the morning, we were close to La Basse Terre, the Lowlands of Guadeloupe. The aspect of the landscape had completely changed; the sun's rays flooded us with light, a hot vapour enveloped us, and the Sulphur-Peak had disappeared behind thick black clouds, which seemed fixed to it and immovable.

As soon as we could set foot on shore I inquired about the means of reaching the Peak, asking for guides and porters—all which were absolutely impossible and unattainable. For, only a few days previously, up there, aloft, a poor negro fellow had perished of cold, and the most brilliant promises could not induce the survivors to repeat the expedition. They tried hard who could most exaggerate the dangers that we should probably incur, and I was in great perplexity what to do. But those obstacles only served to irritate my longing for a good tough

climb. While turning over in my mind divers schemes for succeeding, and gazing at the sluggish stream of the *Rivière aux Herbes*—so called because the said river contains more water-weeds than water—some one approached and hailed me by name. It was an old acquaintance, a distinguished conchologist. A common love for natural history had made us friends in Oceania, and chance had brought us together again here. I told him of my strong desire to get to the top of the Sulphur-Peak, and of the difficulties which threatened to prevent my putting the scheme into execution—at which he was not at all surprised; for the natives have a horror of making the ascent, on account of the cold, from which they suffer cruelly, and the violent winds and storms encountered near the summit. But he himself would act as our guide, accompanied by some sturdy and trusty porters. We decided therefore to start that very evening, travelling all night, in order to reach the Peak at day-break.

We left the Lowlands in good spirits, partly the result of an excellent dinner, and relieved of all anxiety about the next twenty-four hours by the swollen aspect of four provision-baskets, which defied the most formidable appetite to empty them. Fahrenheit marked 83° ; nevertheless we were incased in flannels, as if preparing for a London winter.

My own personality is needless to describe. My friend Dubois, the conchologist, a long, lean, lanky weed of a man, thin enough to pass through the eye of a needle, took strides four feet long, and in case of need could keep them up for twelve successive hours. Our caravan was completed by Doutous, a native of the Pyrenees, bringing with him an iron-shod pole or southern alpenstock, to make him

fancy himself at home; by Rusnec, a short thickset Breton, built of granite; and by corpulent Beaumont, a furious antiquarian on the look-out for old stones and potsherds, but nevertheless capable of admiring the beauties of Nature. Liked by everybody, he had only one enemy, namely his abdomen, rivalling Falstaff's, which he could not get rid of by any stratagem or contrivance. To those gentlemen must be added five tall black devils, not too naked, but barefoot, four of whom carried our provisions, while the fifth took charge of the lanterns (indispensable for climbing here by night) and other trifling articles.

On leaving the Lowlands, we followed the carriage-road which leads to the Camp Jacob. It traverses slightly-undulating hills, whose successive terraces or stages are covered with sugar-canes. There is nothing so monotonous as this uniform and wearisome crop, which confines you between two green walls eight feet high. Consequently, it was with considerable satisfaction that we reached the Camp, the more so as the air there was already cooler, rendering our heavy flannel wraps a little more supportable. Poor Beaumont, puffing and blowing hard, threw himself down flat on the grass, exclaiming that we meant to kill him. He soon, however, recovered breath, and a reference to his flask, filled with first-rate rum, completed his restoration to strength and cheerfulness.

After a quarter of an hour's halt, we resumed our journey by the light of four lanterns, which are absolutely necessary in woods impenetrable to the faint glimmer of a starlight night. The road, a horse-track, offers no difficulties to pedestrians; but now and then we had to cross, by means of bridges made with the trunks of trees, a

torrent whose murmurs constantly accompanied our upward path. The temperature was now much cooler; the silence broken only by the cry of some bird woke up and scared by the light of our lanterns.

At midnight we reached the 'Yellow Baths,' nearly three thousand feet above the level of the sea. The name is derived from an establishment now demolished. All that remains of it, by the side of a half-ruined *ajoupa*,* is a charming circular basin or pool, fed by a sulphureous spring of perfect limpidity, with a temperature of 93° F., and a stratum of soft fine sand at the bottom. The water issues from clefts in rocks that are thickly draped with ferns and moss, and partly overshadowed by lofty trees. How many fashionable thermal Baths, Bains, and Baden would pay a heavy price to possess such a basin, which yet is the work of unaided Nature!

We make another halt. The wind was really raw and chilly. The dripping trees and the plashy ground indicated frequent showers. In vain did we endeavour to light a fire with wood that was sodden to the very pith. Instead of warming ourselves, we only obtained smoke which made our eyes smart and stifled us. We therefore sought, in the hot sulphureous water, a refuge from the pinching cold. Heavy rain accompanied us thither, and its icy drops compelled us to hide completely up to the chin beneath the more agreeable temperature of the spring. As soon as the squall ceased, we hastened to regain the *ajoupa*, where our clothes were very imperfectly sheltered from wet. A cruel moment that! We had not

more than a dozen steps to set, and yet we had plenty of time to be frozen by the bitter blast which whipped our naked flesh. It was a fit occasion for a little refreshment, especially as we were about to encounter a tough bit of the mountain-path. A ham disappeared, followed by a couple of fowls; the rum, our only beverage, was passed round, with the approval even of those amongst us who were the least accustomed to the use of strong liquors.

This supper restored our flagging spirits. With fresh candles in our lanterns and renewed vigour in our limbs, we began the ascent of the 'Morne aux Gouyaviers,' the Guava-tree Hill. Dubois had not deceived us respecting the quality of this portion of the ascent. The path, scarcely traced through a virgin forest, is really a torrent in miniature. Here, you have a rock in front, which forces you to make a stride three feet high; there, a tree fallen across the path gives you the choice of scrambling over it or creeping under it; further on, a treacherous branch all but transfixes you, like a spear. This pleasant amusement lasts for two miles and a half. But how picturesque is the inhospitable chaos! The trees seem immense, colossal; the arborescent ferns are gigantic umbrellas; the creeping plants are monstrous serpents threatening to uncoil, come down, and devour you. The rain-drops still hanging on the leaves flashed like diamonds in the passing light of our lanterns. We fancied ourselves transported into some extraordinary world different from that to which we were accustomed, and our surprise at which could only be expressed by repeated cries of admiration. Beaumont alone, oppressed by his own weight, instead of admiring, groaned aloud, lamenting his rash curiosity. All

* *Ajoupa*, a word whose nationality I am unable to guarantee, is a shelter built with a few vertical stakes in three-quarters of an hour or so, in the midst of a forest, roofed and lined with branches, especially of palm-trees—in short, a primitive hut.

the sympathy he received took the shape of personal jokes ; and the threat of being left alone, to find his way without light or food, decided him to resume the journey onwards.

We left the Morne to enter the 'Mules' Savannah,' after providing ourselves, in imitation of our guide, with an original umbrella, namely, the leaf of a climbing arum more than a yard long. Similar leaves were employed to cover our provision-baskets. The precaution was by no means needless; hitherto the trees had sheltered us from the rain; but we were now approaching a region where vegetation is more rare and showers more frequent.

Tradition relates that the Savannah derives its name from the inhabitants hiding all their mules there during an attack upon the island by the English. Be that as it may, the 'Savane à Mulets' is a depression between the base of the cone and the 'Morne aux Gouyaviers.' Water drains off from it very slowly; the rubbish carried down by the continual rains, accumulating there, decomposes into a quagmire of deep and yielding mud bestrewed with the roots of trees and broken branches. It is the home of the mountain *palétuvier* or mangrove, which has nothing in common with its namesake of the coast, the true mangrove, except its love for water. Tall trees do not grow there; only stunted shrubs and herbaceous plants.

The mangrove of the coast, *Rhizophora mangle*, is a low tree luxuriating at the mouths of rivers and in the salt lagunes of inter-tropical countries, remarkable for the adventitious roots (whence its name) that start from its stem and branches, and soon fix themselves in the soil. Generally the parent trunk dies, and the tree is sup-

ported by the supplemental stems, giving the wood (for the mangrove is a social plant) a singular aspect. On these stems, when within reach of the tide, shell-fish cluster; whence the stories about the oyster-tree. A mangrove thicket harbours animal life in all its forms, from the monkey gambolling from branch to branch, the ugly but excellent (to eat) ignane lizard, down to annelids and other creepy-crawlies. The mud retained by the roots engenders myriads of insects, which render the coast almost uninhabitable, and moreover gives rise to dangerous fevers. But mangrove bark yields an astringent febrifuge, so that the antidote is close to the bane.

The wind, increasing in violence, brought with it the sulphureous fumes of the volcano. The cold and pelting rain which fell proved the usefulness of our improvised umbrellas. The temperature had fallen to 50° F.; we had reached an altitude of three thousand six hundred feet, at the coldest moment in the four-and-twenty hours. The moon, emerging from behind the cone of the volcano, fitfully lighted up this desolate scene. Our dusky companions advanced with difficulty, and we ourselves were obliged to make great exertions to reach the base of the cone at a shelter called 'La Pierre Cortés,' Cortez's Stone.

After a few minutes' repose, we began to climb the cone, whose slope rises at an angle of 52°. Our lanterns, beaten by a violent gale, afforded us but little aid, and we were glad to use our hands as well as our feet. Each one of us followed in silence the steps of him who went before him. I was then the last of the line. I heard a loud cry; a lantern shot past me within a few inches of my face, and was smashed to pieces on the rocks below. We all stopped at

once, asking what had happened. I was greatly relieved on learning that the lantern was not accompanied by its owner. An unlucky negro, foolishly turning round, and seeing nothing but empty space before him, had been seized with giddiness, and, but for Rusquec's vigorous grasp, must infallibly have followed his lantern—which was the only loss we had to deplore. We kept up the poor black fellow's courage by dragging him on with us as far as a little platform where we had decided to await the daylight.

The grand question now was to heat some coffee. The only combustibles within our reach were shrubs and grasses saturated with wet. Two basket-lids supplied the necessary fuel. In a few minutes we were sipping deliciously-hot coffee, which did us all the good in the world. Heavy clouds drifted past beneath our feet, driven along by a strong north wind. Dubois took it as a sign that the summit would be clear, which for us was a most important point. Between the gusts we could hear the growls of the mountain. It was giving unmistakable signs of life and vivacity. Our excellent guide did his best to moderate the curiosity and impatience thereby engendered.

The dawn of day, soon arriving, allowed us to distinguish surrounding objects. Starting afresh, we could appreciate Dubois's prudence in making us wait. We frequently met with crevices capable of swallowing our whole party up, and all the more dangerous because they were likewise half hidden by vast beds of yellow-tinted sphagnum moss.

We reached the summit. The blacks and the provender had been left at the 'Grotte des Amis,' and we hastened to mount the most elevated pinnacle. The sky, perfectly clear to the north and the

east, was veiled to the south, in which direction we were unable to see Les Saintes, and still less Domenica. The sun rose radiant, and his beams stole down the mountain to wake up Pointe-à-Pitre, successfully illuminating Antigua and Montserrat, and, still further off, St. Christopher's, which is almost as lofty as Guadeloupe. The Lowlands in turn emerged from the shades of night. In spite of the wind, which made us shiver and shake, we could not sufficiently feast our eyes on this magnificent spectacle; but a vexatious cloud with absolute suddenness enveloped us and cut short our enthusiasm. The best thing we could do was to quit our observatory and pay a visit to the 'Cratère Napoléon'—a circus from two to three thousand feet in circumference, surrounded by pinnacles of considerable height. Numerous crevices break up the central area, on which, for a very good reason, not a single blade of grass exists. From the crevices puffs of scalding hot sulphureous vapour escape with a deafening noise, resembling the blowing of half a score of asthmatic steam-engines. We got as near as we could to one of the crevices, in order to gather specimens of the sulphur deposited on its brink. The stifling vapour burnt our faces and condensed itself upon our clothes. Sulphur-fumes are employed to bleach straw hats: but ours were perfectly blackened by these, as well as all the silver we had about us.

Our ardour for investigation being calmed by sensations peculiar to empty stomachs, we returned to the 'Grotte des Amis,' whence a tiny spiral of smoke was streaming, indicating the sacrifice of another basket to the coffee-pot. While enjoying our breakfast, we noticed that the grotto is formed by an enormous rock which some earthquake had shaken from its

place aloft, causing it to fall in a leaning position against the vertical cliff that had been its pedestal.

The cold was pinching; at least we thought so with a high wind at 46° F.; which gave the hint to hasten our explorations. We crossed 'the Devil's Bridge,' a heap of fallen rocks on the top of a precipice, leading—not without danger, if you are subject to giddiness—to 'the Great Northern Cleft,' a vast crevice extending to the base of the cone and ending in a crater, with vertical walls, pierced here and there with holes whence smoke escaped.

The wind increased in violence, accompanied by incessant rain. Nevertheless, several breaks in the cloud gave us glimpses of the Lowlands bathed in sunshine, and the vessels in the harbour with their flags drooping motionless, showing how perfect was the calm down below. That distant sunshine looked irresistibly inviting to those of us who cared nothing about natural history; we therefore bade adieu to the Sulphur-Peak, and in twenty-five minutes we were at the base of the cone which we had found so wearisome to scale. I had the pleasure of gathering on its slope a little pale violet resembling that which beds our fields in spring. We found the Mules' Savannah not at all easier to traverse by day than by night, being ever and always an ocean of mud, which we left behind us with complete indifference, the cleanest and tidiest of our party being covered with its dirt from head to foot. We should have puzzled some of the London valets who advertise their skill in putting 'hunting things' to rights after a good run.

The 'Morne aux Gonyaviers' amply repaid us now for the toil its ascent in the dark had cost us. Vegetation there resumes its tro-

pical vigour; the trees, without attaining great dimensions, are hung with parasites—orchids flaunting their eccentric blossoms, aroids expanding their large white trumpets, *poivriers* (peppers) thrusting out their shining leaves. The last is merely the local name given to *Tecoma stans*, of the *Bignonia* family, from the resemblance of its foliage to that of the pepper-tree. The rocks are covered with ferns and mosses; the shot-plant's (canna's) bright red flowers contrast well with its handsome fresh green leaves. Now and then a peep of deep-blue sky proved that we had reached a more genial region, and we found cheerful sunshine at the 'Yellow Baths,' at that moment occupied by jet-black nymphs, whom we left undisturbed at their aquatic gambols, preferring a good solid meal at the *ajoupa*, with our backs comfortably basking in the sun. We became conscious of man's ingratitude when he grumbles at the warmth of the solar rays.

One recommendation of a night ascent is the surprise which awaits your return by day. At Camp Jacob, Nature had resumed all her tropical luxuriance. The woods are in great part composed of *acomas*, trees a hundred and twenty or thirty feet high. Their trunk, more than thirty feet in circumference at the height above the ground where you can measure it standing, is supported at its base by buttress-like roots. This giant tree affords a home to a little world of vegetables. The climbing arum grasps its limbs and mounts with its flexible stems to the summit; ferns select the hollows of its branches; lycopods hang in elegant festoons from the loftier twigs. Elsewhere, between the leaves of a wild pineapple, a bird has built its nest, having no enemy but rats to fear in this happy

island, where serpents are unknown—a dusky St. Patrick banished them in bygone days—and children are ignorant of the delights of birds-nesting.

The hospitable *acoma* harbours a foe—the accursed fig-tree (*Clusia rosea*), whose branches twine round and strangle the colossus until he languishes and dies. The fig then mounts to the topmost summit, displaying there his abundant foliage. But one day comes a hurricane, crushing murderer and victim in one common ruin, and covering a vast extent of ground with their broken limbs, still interlaced in death.

Camp Jacob, eighteen hundred feet above the level of the sea, is the home of the French troops

during the hot season. Only the men who are absolutely indispensable remain in the lowlands near the coast. Thanks to its temperature, which never rises above 80° F., European soldiers are perfectly able to support a three years' residence in the colony. The same system gives the same results at Jamaica and Martinique.

And so, without 'twice ten thousand men,' we 'went up a hill, and then went down again.' Two days afterwards we left Guadeloupe, carrying with us a rich store of souvenirs. And if any of my readers begin to feel 'used up' in regard to the climbing of European mountains, I strongly advise them to try as a change an ascent of this West Indian Sulphur-Cone.

C. T.

LITTLE COQUETTE.

HARK to the mower's cheery 'whet,' its echo sharp and shrill
Comes on the sweet hay-scented air, our joyous hearts to fill
With consciousness of summer-time, when days are warm and long,
And like the birds our happiness finds vent in burst of song!

A wealth of crimson flowers I pluck, of roses red and rare,
To rest upon my love's white breast or deck her golden hair;
This garden seemeth Eden's self, the world seems very sweet,
As on the lawn I wait and watch and listen for her feet.

She comes! Between the laurel-leaves I see a gleam of white,
A vision fair with flowing hair bursts on my 'raptured sight,
A snowy dress, a dainty hat, blue-ribboned,—arch coquette!
She sees, yet feigns to see me not. O charming Violet!

Full well I read each pretty trick, each winning girlish lure,
To tease and tease, and not to make the conquest more secure,
Thou so capricious, I so fond! Ah, lovers' ways we know
Have thus been since the world began, and ever will be so!

SUMMER.

THERE came a whisper through the wind-blown leaves,
That stirred in music underneath the eaves,
And fluttering breeze and fluttering foliage seemed
To waft my thoughts to dreamland as I dreamed
Of Summer.

There came a flood of light, a flush of bloom,
And roses scattered petals of perfume ;
And wings of birds and echoes of their song
Bore every thought in cadence sweet along
To Summer.

There flamed in splendour fierce a fervent sun,
And sweet May paled, and sighed ' My life is done ;
To you, O sister June, be all I lose
And all I fain would gain, if I might choose
For Summer !'

There stood in meadow-grasses ankle-deep
One who awakened from her maiden sleep,
And waking turned to me with smile divine,
And blushing let her hand-clasp close on mine
In Summer.

And all the golden sunlight rained its gold
On tresses bright as any ray they hold,
And all the fervent splendour of the day
Wore fairer splendour then in sky and ray
Of Summer.

For what is earth if love be not our day?
And what is love if love care not to stay,
And staying seal our hearts in dreamless rest?
And resting thus, who dreams and is not blest
In Summer ?

RITA.

A WALK THROUGH THE ARDENNES TO THE MOSELLE.

I was introduced early in life into the brotherhood of Bohemia; learnt to draw a little, scribble a little, speak snatches of many languages, and put up with anything. Besides, I have been in most countries of Europe, and, like Odysseus, 'known the manners and the cities of many men.' So I can't get on without a little wandering; and when duns have been merciful and Commemoration not too extravagant, the knapsack is taken from the cupboard to do another year's duty.

Said George to me, as we were lying lazily in a punt, at the end of last summer term, 'Where shall we go this Long?'

George (wherefore 'George' I do not know, only an old school-name) is like myself in all these things: when once we get away with an old suit of clothes and a knapsack, we have a supreme contempt for conventionalities, and an utter dis-

regard of any obstacles that may come in our way. And I have already remarked George had propounded the important question, 'Where shall we go this Long?'

'Well,' I said, 'our Danube project is out of the question; at least for me, as I love not the Russians, and place just a nominal value on my head; besides, I don't know how you are, but I'm, as usual, more or less insolvent.'

'I vote for France,' said George. 'I know more French than anything.'

'And I for Germany. It must at any rate be some country not a thousand miles away, or how are we to get there?'

'O, of course' we shall walk wherever we go.'

'I'll tell you what,' said I, after a pause; 'I've got it. You've never seen the Moselle, and Belgium will do as well as France for you to air your talents in. What do you say

to walking through Belgium and the Ardennes country into Germany, striking the Moselle, and following it to the Rhine?

That was how our route was settled; and more than that, we determined to try and fight our way across this country, sleeping only in the tiniest inns or anywhere we could; and that we might be obliged to tramp, we made a solemn compact to meet at St. Catherine's Wharf, for the Ostend boat, with not more than eleven or twelve pounds in each of our pockets.

So, after about three weeks of the season in London, we found ourselves at Dinant, a pretty little town on the Meuse about half an hour by train from Namur. I had not been here since I was six years old, and by degrees confused recollections came back to me—of the old fortress on the heights behind the town, and the castle of Bouvigne on the other side of the valley, where the three sisters leapt from the beleaguered walls when all was lost save honour. Then there was the old gateway of rock, the Rocher Bayard, where I had believed a giant lived, through which I always hurried that he might not pounce down upon me unawares. Yes, it all came back to me—the *place* where the market-women sat, and the church with its dark-tiled steeple, and the river dividing the little town.

I should like to have stopped here a day or two to sketch and to fish, but we had not come for that; so early the next morning we consigned our portmanteaus to the care of madame, dressed ourselves in strange apparel, and packed our knapsacks.

Now let me first enumerate the things we took with us, which were all we could possibly want. *Experto crede.* Besides the clothes on our backs, each of us carried one

spare shirt, three spare pair of socks (worsted, not cotton), the necessary materials for performing one's ablutions, a towel, a comb and two brushes between us, a looking-glass two inches' square, slippers, some needles and thread, sketching and writing materials, a small spirit-stove (in one knapsack), a mug, tin plate, knife and fork, some brandy, half-pound of tea; and last, but by no means least, a large piece of waterproof sheeting, rolled up and strapped on to the top of the knapsack. Besides which, one of us, the one who did not carry the spirit-lamp, had a long strip of canvas also strapped on. I kept in my pocket a map of our route, a passport, and a small revolver. And we each of us carried a large clasp-knife and a walking-stick fishing-rod.

As we meant to do everything for ourselves, we had calculated on always keeping near some river or stream, and intended to wash our own shirts every day, wearing one while the other was drying, only in those first happy days there was still a remnant of starch in the land.

We always left a little room in our knapsacks to carry provisions, of which we had on this morning procured a plentiful supply, including a pot of Liebig, as we passed through the streets looking for the road to Marche. It was about ten in the morning on a beautiful August day that we found ourselves on the heights behind Dinant, looking back at the Meuse and Bouvigne. Then that sense of freedom came over one that is so unlike anything else in the world. We had been dancing in crowded rooms, wasting the day with late breakfasts, and prolonging night till morning, full of engagements and obligations; and here we were, out in the sun and the summer, without a tie in the world to bind us, without a

single call that need be obeyed, forgetting all ceremony and conventionality. We felt supremely indifferent as to where we went or where we slept, how we looked, what we ate or drank, and we were responsible to no one. I know of no sensation so delightful as this; and I think those people miss much of the pleasure of life who know no more of the Continent than what they learn from a sleeping-car and the Grand Hotel, or by ascending a mountain in the train.

On the whole, Belgium is doubtless not a pretty country; there is a sameness in her roads with the poplar avenues, and her canals with windmills on their banks. But here in the south it is very different; there are none of the quaint old sleeping cities, but only a village dotted here and there over the forest country, which is too barren for the habitual industry of the Belgian people. These southerners are another race in their deep wooded valleys, and the hamlets nestling under the protection of some stern old *château* of other days, that has stories enough of its own to take many days in the telling.

At one o'clock we had walked about eleven miles,—quite enough in three hours when one has fourteen or fifteen pounds' weight to carry,—and we turned aside into the wood near a stream to eat and to repose. We spread our waterproof sheeting on the ground, and flung ourselves upon it in the shade. With our spirit-stove and the Liebig we made some soup, and feasted on rolls, hard-boiled eggs, and some slices of ham, which we had brought with us from the Tête d'Or. Then, when, as Homer says, 'we had satisfied the desire of eating and drinking,' George lit his pipe, put his head on his knapsack, and looked supremely comfortable. 'I say, old man,' he

remarked, 'I can't move again. Mix me a drop of brandy-and-water, as it's the only beverage we can raise; I don't like stream-water quite unadulterated.'

So I washed the mugs from which we had drunk our soup, to supply this lazy mortal; and then, taking up the same position, I commended myself to the god of sleep. And I think I must have slept, for it was half-past four when I threw a hairbrush at George, and said, 'Wake up!'

The spirit-lamp was again put into requisition for five-o'clock tea; and we packed up to continue our journey to La Marche. But the sun was already very low, and by the time we got under weigh, we had to light a match to see how the fingerpost at the cross-roads pointed; so it was not till after nine that the twenty-four miles were accomplished, and the knapsacks flung from our weary shoulders. The lights had already been put out in the inn, but a little supper, some Bordeaux, and seltzer water were still procurable.

The next morning was as beautiful as the previous day had been; but, I am ashamed to say, we were neither of us down before half-past eight or nine to the capital breakfast that they can always provide in the smallest of foreign inns. When we had paid our bill, which was under ten francs, we took the road again, having in view as our next halting-place a small town called La Roche, some twenty miles farther on.

We struck off to the left of the main road into a beautiful country of woods and streams, where the undulations of the ground gave opportunity for many short cuts, meeting very few people, and hardly passing any cottages after the first mile was behind us. Here and there were tracts of cultivated land, and at rare intervals we ob-

served a few labourers tearing up the roots of the pines that had been cut down. But this process is long and laborious, and the land that is reclaimed scarcely repays the trouble, for in a few years' time the wild growth that cannot entirely be eradicated springs up afresh, and all the labour is undone.

I wish I had time or space to detail all that day's adventures—of the friendly butcher whose great idea was that Belgium would unite with England and France against Germany and Russia; or how we fished, and cooked our fish too; how we washed our clothes, and bathed in a clear brook that divided the little valley; or of the strange old couple who kept the lonely forest *auberge* where we made a kind of meal, and of the old gentleman's strange way of muttering, 'Tenez, tenez,' whatever was the question asked, and how he begged us to return and tell him some news of the world, for he heard nothing in the forest there, and how he murmured, 'Tenez, tenez,' incessantly, as we left him to wonder over us, till his voice grew faint in the distance.

There were eight miles more between us and La Roche, and they seemed very long miles indeed; besides, until we were almost in the town, it still seemed far out of sight. The road ran high up, cut in the side of a rocky ridge, and suddenly as we turned a corner, as if transplanted there by magic, we found ourselves in or rather above La Roche; for by the moonlight we saw in the valley beneath us the most picturesque of little towns, divided nearly equally by a river; above it, on the other side, the ruin of an old château stood out black against the moonlight, and a few lights glimmered in the windows of the old gabled houses.

When we entered *chez* Meunier, to do which we had to pass through the kitchen, every one was at supper. The hotel had been full all the summer, and had lodgers living out in half the houses of the little place. After some hesitation, it was discovered that there was just one more bedroom in La Roche, which we could share, in a cottage a few doors off. A very small room it was, with one bed and a shake-down; a salad-bowl, hot-water jug, and a napkin to wash with. Here we made ourselves as tidy as we could under the circumstances, and then went to the hotel to feast the night away; only our hostess expected us in at half-past nine, for people retire very early here. So, after dining, we sat in the street on the window-sill of a neighbouring house, or an old green bench, as was the custom there, drinking Moselle and smoking till it was time to turn in.

At breakfast next morning the black coats of an English family suggested the idea that it was Sunday, and we felt very disreputable. However, we were soon great friends, and from them we learnt that La Roche was almost always full; that most of the people lodged out in the town, and had their meals at the hotel; and that the whole arrangement was most absurdly moderate, as the railroads had not yet brought high prices with them. Travelling must be done by diligence. There is a town, the name of which I cannot remember, about six miles off, and the diligence runs between the station and La Roche. As there was a diligence starting that night at nine, which would help us on our way, we elected to stop all day. The fishing draws many people to this valley; and I think, were it more widely known, the scenery would bring many artists to this little old-fashioned

place, where everything is so sociable and homely, that after dinner the whole company would sit out in the street to drink their coffee and talk away the hottest hours of the day.

But the greatest surprise at La Roche was the bill; and as I am writing for the benefit of any who may travel over the same ground, I must be pardoned for mentioning these details. We had our beds; breakfast; dinner, with soup, fish, three or four courses, and the beer of the country; supper, with two or three courses; attendance *tout compris*, for the incredibly small sum of four francs a head. Wine of course was extra. May the railroad never come any nearer to La Roche!

At nine o'clock punctually the driver cracked his whip, and we rattled away into the night and the forest, on top of the lumbering old conveyance. A cigar bought the friendship of our Jehu, who proceeded to enlighten us on various topics. The road through the forest here was lined with mountain ash-trees, and the coach-lights fell weirdly on the red clusters of berries. I never saw them in such profusion before. At last we came to the first halting-place, and the old curé who was traveling inside insisted on standing the whole company the necessary glass of *pecci*—the spirit of this country, without which I don't believe the coachman could drive or the peasant travel.

It was a very dark night, and when we got up again we began to find it rather cold; so George proposed, as there was no luggage, that we should lie down flat on the top of the coach and pull the tarpaulin over us; and I seldom had a better sleep anywhere. We woke up to find ourselves at Houfalize, about four o'clock in the morning. Before long we had

had a wash, and made a most excellent breakfast in the small hotel for a mere nominal sum; and so civil was our host, that, as he offered his card, he insisted on packing up a parcel of bread and meat to put in our knapsacks before he showed us the road for Clervaux. This little village of Houfalize is most prettily situated, running up the side of a hill, which rises in the centre of a valley of pines, quite like an Italian town.

But we covered so much ground that I cannot stop to describe all our adventures during the eighteen miles that we walked that day: how we crossed the frontier of the grand duchy of Luxemburg—I should think the most barren district in the world, except the Desert—how we could get nothing to eat but a mess of potatoes and salad, with a few eggs; and how, whenever we thought we were approaching Clervaux, another ridge of hills sprang up and parted us from it. We got there early in the afternoon, just in time for a bathe before dinner. It had, like most of the places we had been in, an old castle, a stream, some picturesque houses, and thick woods, lying deep in a valley on the line to Luxembourg.

After an excellent dinner, enlivened by the presence of four Belgian students from the university at Brussels, who were there on the same business as we were, we sat out late talking to the Luxemburgers. They lead a curious kind of nondescript existence, speaking either French or German, very proud of their independence and their *Ministerium*; but it is a meagre little bit of land, and theirs must be an uncomfortable sort of independence. We had another twenty miles to do the next day to get on to Neuerburg, so we could spend no more

time at Clervaux or Clerf, as they call it there. At the village of Datsburg, which lay about half way to Neuerburg, near the commencement of the German frontier, we were to find a *post wagen*. But when we had got there, and had crossed the stream that marked the border, we inquired at the tumble-down inn, the Three Dogs, and found there was no *post* that would help us; but they were able

to provide some dinner for us, of a most primitive kind of course; and as a very violent shower of rain began at this moment to fall, we remained there till late in the afternoon, making great friends with the landlord, who had been a sailor, and had travelled nearly all over the world. He gave us his experiences of the war, in which he had taken part as a Jager, both at Wissemburg and Gravelotte. He

was a kind of forest-keeper, and had a great deal of work to do with the wild boar that swarmed round that district.

With many mutual *zumwidersehens* and much clinking of the small *schnapps* glasses, we started as soon as it cleared to find our way over the hills of Neuerburg.

Of course we lost the way, and the few peasants we met were so deficient in intellect, they could do but little to help us; it was always '*Schlechter Weg*,' better go round by the high-road; and however far we walked it was always '*fünfviertel Stund*.' So that the Wiener Hof was already locked up for the

night when we knocked at the door.

The landlord was a most attentive man, and insisted the next day on taking us up to see the ruins of the Schloss, one of those vast old piles of masonry that look impregnable from below, as it was till they planted the French cannon on the heights behind. At dinner the Herr Apotheker and the Herr Notaire gave us the pleasure of their company; and afterwards we were taken to see the Apotheker's gardens, which were very prettily laid out on terraces up the hill-side.

The diligence for Bitburg started

at two o'clock that night; only the box-seat was occupied, as we were the only passengers. The driver had been a hussar, and had taken part in most of the great battles; 'but Gravelotte,' he said, 'that was the worst; only for myself, Dijon was the hottest work—I had to charge there fifteen times in one day.' He was never scratched himself, he said; one got reckless after a time; only to ride over one's comrades, that was a little horrible always, although the horses never touched them.

We were so anxious now to get to Moselle that we passed through Bitburg to Erdorf, and took train to Ehrang, which is only a mile or so from the river. This was a change of plans, as I had wanted to cross from Bitburg over the mountains to Berncastel; but fortune brought us to Ehrang, which was hardly out of sight of the towers of Treves.

There is so much to describe on an expedition of this kind that I have been able to enter but little into any details of how we passed our time, for we were not walking all day long. In the hottest hours of the day we bathed, washed our clothes when a friendly landlady had not done so for us, fished, sketched, and consumed the lunch which we always brought with us. Our knapsacks seemed to have grown lighter, and now there was enough room for a small bottle of Moselle in the top, and we were always supplied against an emergency.

We stopped at Neumagen that night. The 'Mosel,' as we called it now, being in Germany, is the most winding of rivers; and though Berncastel is some thirty miles from Neumagen, if one follows the stream, it would only have made a difference of some six or seven miles in our walk had we gone on over the mountains. Treves we

had left behind us, as we meant to see it on our way back, and now we did not care at all where we went. So that evening, after seven, when the sun had set, we descended from the hills upon the river, when there were just one or two lights in the old quaintly-gabled houses on the other bank; the hills behind were one deep dark shadow, and over all was a wonderful stillness and peace, broken only by the splash of the oar in the old ferry-boat as we passed over.

There was no room in the inns. But they boarded us out with an old lady in the village, whose house was, as Moselle houses go, clean. The Fates were against our getting to Berncastel; for the next day we spent the morning fishing and bathing in the river, between Neumagen and Piesport, where some of the best wine on the river is made. And having mentioned bathing in the Moselle, I should advise no one who is not a good swimmer to try it; the current surges against you and forces you along, and the opposite side can only be reached some fifty yards farther down. It is not so bad everywhere, but in this particular spot I think it is the strongest stream I have ever bathed in.

The sun was already setting when we reached Piesport, which was only a very few miles on; we could get nothing to eat here, though the wine, wine at about eightpence the quart, was capital. Try Piesporter '72! At a village a few miles beyond we found an individual answering to the name of Fisherpietschen, who was willing for a trifling sum to convey us towards Winterich, where we determined to sleep, as it was impossible to get farther that night.

A splendid night, for it was night already, and the rocks stood out clear and sharp on either side of us against the sky, as we drifted

down mile after mile without an effort, except for an occasional stroke of the paddle to keep us in middle stream, now in the darkness and shadow, and now in the light where the moon gleamed in the ripples, till the lights of Winterich appeared like fireflies in the dim distance. Winterich is picturesque, but not otherwise interesting. So we were off very early, taking a short road over the mountains, through the beautiful Veldenzer Thal, in the middle of which rises a steep hill crowned by the noble ruins of Veldenz. The strength of this old castle must have been very great, for all round the hills are traces of outlying walls and towers, and the fortress itself is built on a rock so as to be almost impregnable in time of siege. A village, with old irregular gables and red-tiled roofs, nestles among the woods in the valley, and assists the picture; the amphitheatre of rocks around this imposing centre and the beauty of the colouring make this one of the most striking points on the Moselle.

'I have arrived, by careful calculation, at the fact,' said I, as we sat down to dinner in the Post at Berncastel, 'that to-morrow is the Sabbath-day, and all the worthy inhabitants will turn out in their best clothes.' Now we had been getting more and more disreputable lately, the utter absence of starch in our shirts and the many stains upon our garments caused us to fight rather shy of meeting the Berncasteler in his Sunday waistcoat; so we fled very early the next day and took the short road to Trarbach.

Before taking leave of Berncastel, I must say that it shares with Cochem the distinction of being the most flourishing place on the river. It boasts a bridge, the only one between Coblenz and Treves;

it has two good inns, and is a halting-place for people who are ascending the stream in the weekly steamboats, because it is only an hour's walk from Trarbach, where the boat remains for the night; though it takes some four hours to steam round all the bends that the river makes between the two places.

We dined at Trarbach, under the ruins of the Gräfinburg, that was built by Loretta of Sponheim. I have said nothing about the Moselle legends, but being a miniature Rhine, this river has its stories too; and the story of Loretta is characteristic.

Loretta's brothers were gone to the war, and she was left in charge of the old Marienburg. Whereupon the fighting Baldwin, Archbishop of Treves, saw an opportunity for exacting a large indemnity for some imagined breach of discipline. But one day, as he was floating down the stream, his barge was suddenly arrested by a chain thrown across the river, and the bishop was unceremoniously hurried off as a prisoner to the Marienburg, and brought before the Gräfin, who kept him there till an enormous ransom was paid, treating him hospitably and courteously, but at the same time remarking that the bishop was a *gourmet*, and she could not afford to keep him for nothing. With his ransom she built the Gräfinburg.

The next night was very stormy, and to escape bad weather we turned into the tiniest of inns in the tiny village of Burg. And the next day, crossing from Pünderich to the Marienburg, we looked in vain for any traces of the old home of the Counts of Sponheim, but found a ruined chapel of the old Marienburg convent, with lancet windows of red sandstone, and traces of fresco on the roofless walls. From there to Alf, where the road

branches off from the river to the more fashionable baths of Bertrich; and from Alf we ascended the heights of Burg Arras, and slept in the castle-ruins. There was a vaulted chamber below the old round keep, open to the night on one side, but sheltered by the wild growth of the mountain; and here, having torn down some bushes and dry grass, we rolled ourselves up in our waterproof, and after supper slept. No one could disturb us; the hill was very steep, and no one ever climbed it, for there was not even a path. A big fire in the corner looked cheerful, and warned off the ghosts of departed heroes. I never had a better night in my life; and when we got up to see the sun rise about half-past four the next morning, I was glad for that alone that we had dared the night air on a mountain-top and the ghosts of murdered robber-knights.

Over the whole of that vast landscape was a wonderful soft gray light; below, and over the hills around, the pine-forests still waved in the dark shadow of night; in the distance the silver stream of the river was shrouded in a thick veil of mist, and over the dark-blue pine-trees the white clouds were rising. Then the purple rocks beyond the river grew paler, grew golden, and from behind them the morning sun arose and broke the night mists with his rays, changed the gloom of the pinewoods to their own deep green, tinged the one cloud that lingered on the horizon with a pale shade of crimson, and woke up the sleeping birds. We saw all this. They never saw the world who never saw the sun rise over it.

At the foot of the hill ran a stream; and we splashed about in the clear water, frightening the trout, that so seldom were disturbed, from their haunt under the falls, and driving them into the shallows.

So numerous were they, that we could not resist the temptation to linger by this water a little longer, and try our luck with the rod. There was nothing left from the last night's supper but a roll and a mouthful of wine, and on this we subsisted till about two o'clock in the afternoon, when we came to a little village where *kermesse* was going on; but *kermesse in die küche*, not *kirche*, so we got a capital dinner. I cannot help quoting the bill to show what prices are upon the Moselle, and then I will write no more; our dinners, with more than a quart of wine and coffee afterwards, cost us less than three shillings.

To Kochem we came that night, and thence on past Moselkern, to the one perfect castle that still remains in all its ancient splendour, Schloss Elz, with its tapestries and mediæval furniture, deep hidden in a fairy valley; past Brodenbach and Ehrenburg in the 'vale of honour;' past Gondorf to Coblenz. I can tell no more; for the legends are many, the scenes are perfect, and all the ruined fastnesses of the robber-knights would claim their share in the story. Go and see it as we did, before it awakes from among the sleeping centuries to find its torrent stemmed by bridges, the old historic mountains pierced with tunnels, and the echoes that have answered to the voice of Loretta ringing with the steam-whistle of a train flying from Berlin to the frontier. They have not spoiled its beauty yet; and still you may cross in the drifting ferry with the ox-cart and the peasants, who have known no other scenes in their lives, and still keep the traditions of old in their hearts.

It is not far to go. You can walk over all this country, with a light heart and a few coins in your pocket. They will not cheat you

in the villages because you are a stranger, but make you as comfortable as they can in their own homely way, and teach you to love their river and its stories as they do themselves. It is very near you if you will not do as others do, and make it far away.

THE BOATMAN.

A MAIDEN sits in a tiny bark,
Singing so sweetly ;
The boatman he is grim and dark ,
Rowing so fleetly.

The stream is narrow, the banks are fair :
' Rest thee, good master.'
Idle her longing, vain her pray'r,
He rows the faster.

Anon, they float on a river wide,
A mighty river.
Instead of flowers by the water-side,
Pale aspens quiver.

And lo, a woman where sat the maid
Who sang so sweetly ;
The boatman, grim and undismayed,
Still rowing fleetly.

On and on, till they reach the sea
That flows for ever ;
And drift away on the ocean free,
Returning never.

And vain it is for earthly eye
To follow thither ;
And vainly mortal tongue may cry,
' Gone—whither, whither ?'

S. E. G.

A WET DAY AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

It was a hopelessly wet day, and a party of young people, staying at a large place in the country, looked unmistakably bored as they stood about in the hall after luncheon.

Frank Egerton, the eldest son of the house, turned from a window in disgust.

'There's not the faintest chance of its clearing, so we may as well give up shooting this afternoon. What *can* we do?' he asked, in an exaggerated tone of despair. 'Miss Brook, what must you think of our climate?'

'Can't we rise superior to weather, and strike out a new idea?' interrupted Miss Egerton.

'I have thought of something for to-night,' he answered. 'There's a dance at the Dunstone Asylum. An invitation came for us some days ago.' Various exclamations of horror broke from the young ladies as he continued: 'We can dance with each other if we don't like the inmates. *You* will come?' he added, in a lower voice, turning to Miss Brook.

She hesitated.

'I don't know. I never did such a thing before.'

'You will probably dance with much saner people than you have done elsewhere, and I believe they have a capital floor.'

'It seems so sad,' she said. 'Does any one go?'

'Old Mr. Hunter, our nearest neighbour, always makes a point of going on principle, and takes any one who will go. I have not heard of him lately, and I don't know if he has people staying with

him; but we are a large party ourselves.'

'You will think me a coward; but is it safe?' and Violet Brook raised bewitching eyes appealingly.

'Of course; or how could you think I should suggest it? I have never been at their parties myself; but they have lots of them, as they say they do the patients so much good, and have never had an accident. The place naturally is full of doctors and keepers.'

'And *must* we dance with the patients?'

'Not unless you like; but I believe numbers of them seem quite sane, and that you would never find out any difference. The only one I know is a poor fellow who was at Eton with me, who fancies he is the Emperor of China, and has the wildest ideas on the subject—quite incorrect for the character; but if he is humoured he is managed with perfect ease.'

'What is his real name, if it is not wrong to ask?'

'Stapylton. I know nothing of his family, or how he went off his head. In fact I have not seen him for years; but the doctor told me about him, finding I used to know him, and of this new fancy of his.'

Mrs. Egerton crossing the hall at this moment was eagerly seized upon by her son, and rather reluctantly consented to the plan.

'Is it *really* safe?' Violet Brook whispered to her.

'Quite. Our doctor has often begged me to go; he says these parties do so much good; but Frank never expressed any wish to go before,' she answered, with

not unusual maternal blindness, in rather a puzzled voice. 'If we do go,' she added, turning to the rest of the party, 'I do hope you will all behave well.'

'Why, mother!' exclaimed Frank, 'you talk as if we were children going to our first Christmas-tree. Even if we wished to do wrong, I think we should all be too much afraid.'

'Yes, indeed,' she answered. 'I hope you will all, especially you, young ladies, humour them. You do not know what might happen if you were to excite or annoy them in the slightest degree.'

Everyone promised to be careful, and a few hours later found them entering the ballroom at the Dunstone Asylum.

Violet felt horribly frightened at first, but a valse with Frank Egerton restored her courage, and she looked round her with interest.

'Do you see that poor man,' Frank asked her, in a low voice, 'just coming towards us with the doctor? I suppose they could not get him to come sooner; but how terribly sad he looks! What cruelty to bring him!'

He was a tall striking-looking man, and Violet continued to watch him, when Frank left her to dance with some one else. While the doctor moved on he remained standing, half concealed by a curtain, watching the dancers with a look of agony.

He seemed so miserably out of place, Violet felt full of pity, and wondered if she dare speak to him. He caught her eye and smiled, such a sad pitiful smile that all her fear vanished.

'You are alone?' she said.

'Yes,' he answered; adding suddenly, 'My poor child, do you wish me to dance with you?'

Nothing was further from Violet's thoughts; but she was afraid of annoying him.

'As you wish,' she said; 'but tell me first who you are,' hoping from his answer to find some guide for her future conduct.

'My name is Stapylton,' he answered.

'The Emperor of China!' she exclaimed involuntarily, and then feared what might happen; but he only said,

'Am I? Just as you please. Will you sit down here till the next square begins? I never valse.'

'That is something to be thankful for,' thought Violet, as she obediently took the offered chair.

Mr. Hunter had returned home with some friends the day before, and at breakfast announced his intention of going, as usual, to the dance at the Dunstone Asylum.

He was surprised when one of his guests started at the name, and eagerly asked if it was near.

'Ten miles; but why do you want to know, Stapylton?'

'I'll tell you afterwards,' was the answer; and as soon as they were alone he told him a younger brother of his had had sunstroke in India, which, in addition to other troubles, had completely driven him out of his mind, and that he was now in the asylum at Dunstone.

'I never stayed here before, you know, and had not taken in you were in the same part of the world. I wonder if I dare go and see him?'

'To-night?'

'Yes. I need not see him unless the doctor approves; but I could not stay here knowing you were there.'

'Go this afternoon, my horses want some work.'

'Thanks; but I may as well go with you, it is a long journey. I can see the doctor at any rate; and I shall be glad to do so, for I missed my letters abroad, and have

not heard of my poor brother for some time.'

So Major Stapylton entered the asylum that evening with Mr. Hunter, but waited alone till the doctor could come to him. At last he appeared, making a thousand apologies, but slightly annoyed by a visit on business at such a time.

Major Stapylton apologised in his turn for his untimely visit.

'I am afraid you have given yourself needless trouble,' the doctor said; 'I have inquired, and Mr. Stapylton is asleep. In his weak state he must not be disturbed. He is better, however, and the new delusion I told you of in my last letter quite passed away. If you will call again—'

'Yes, thanks. Don't let me detain you.'

The doctor turned fussily to the door.

'You see I should not be absent for an instant to-night; but pray do not wait here. Come with me; you will see nothing painful, and Mr. Hunter is so kind, he always stays to the end.'

A strange fascination seemed to draw the other from the room, to see the poor creatures with whom his brother now passed his life, and he consented.

The doctor, recovering his temper, talked on as they walked towards the ballroom.

'Nothing painful, I assure you; but if any of them speak to you, be sure to humour them.'

As they entered the room, Major Stapylton, rather horrified, shrank back behind a curtain, while the doctor added, as Violet looked towards them,

'Do you see that girl? She is one of our worst cases.'

'In white?' Major Stapylton asked, in doubt as to which was meant.

The doctor was suddenly called

away; and as Major Stapylton was still looking at Violet, wondering if it was she, her apparent forwardness in addressing an unknown stranger confirmed the idea of her madness, while the slightest doubt on the subject was removed when she spoke to him as Emperor of China, he never having heard of his brother's imperial delusion.

They sat together for some moments in silence, till Violet, finding it unbearable, and growing more and more nervous, said,

'I wish your majesty would give me some tea; though I suppose it is not so good as what you have in China?'

'I don't know; but I see some in that room, if you will come with me.'

Violet rose, and was surprised by the perfectly self-possessed way in which he gave her his arm, and brought her some tea. Still his sad expression, and the pitying way he treated her, prevented her from guessing the truth.

'Shall we stay here?' he asked.

'I cannot bear to see the dancing. I am afraid I cannot dance with you.'

'I would much rather stay here,' Violet answered, feeling greatly relieved, but thinking to herself, 'Poor dear man, how changeable you are!' I wish I could do you any good.' Trying to suit her conversation to him, she continued, 'Is it long since you were in China?'

'I never was there in my life!' was the startling answer, while Violet felt frightened as he added confusedly, 'at least, I mean—I don't know.' And thought in his turn, 'Poor girl! I forgot I was the Chinese Emperor. How on earth can I keep up the character?'

Violet hurriedly went on,

'Of course. I understand. I suppose you knew Dr. Smith before, and are paying him a visit?'

Major Stapylton shuddered.

'What! She thinks I am a

fellow-patient, then! However, poor Charles is, so she is not far wrong. I wonder if she can talk sensibly; and he hastily changed the conversation by asking if she had read one of the books of the day.

Violet knew it well, and to her surprise and delight found her Emperor capable of a rational conversation. She had seldom enjoyed one so much. She was very young, and had not yet got over shyness with strangers, but why need she be shy with a poor lunatic? So, with the object of pleasing him, she talked without hesitation of her favourite pursuits and books, and answered personal questions without taking any offence.

Major Stapylton, on his side, delighted with the fresh young girl, touched by her openness, and profoundly sorry for her awful misfortune, tried from mingled kindness and curiosity to encourage her almost unconscious revelations of character.

'Have you been here long?' he at last ventured to ask.

'About an hour, I think,' she answered, not understanding.

'In the ballroom; but I mean how long have you been at Dunstone?'

'O, what shall I do! he thinks I am mad too!' she thought; but her look of terror warned Major Stapylton he was on dangerous ground.

'I beg your pardon,' he said, 'I had no right to ask. Tell me more of your visit to Italy.' And plunging into mutual Roman recollections, they were again delighted with the rational way in which each conversed.

One of the gentlemen of the Egerton party now came and asked Violet to dance, explaining that he could not find her before, and adding in a low voice,

'Will you come, or do you prefer staying here?'

'I would rather stay here, thanks; but please ask Mrs. Egerton if she minds.'

'Certainly; but I should think in this case it was all right;' and he went off to report that Miss Brook was perfectly happy, talking to a very good-looking lunatic.

Mrs. Egerton, not knowing what was the usual etiquette at lunatic asylums, left her undisturbed, and she and Major Stapylton had another hour of delightful talk; till Mr. Hunter came to look for him, when Violet seized the opportunity to escape. Mrs. Egerton leaving soon afterwards, she saw her new friend no more.

Frank secured a seat in the carriage opposite to her, and began to reproach her for the way in which she had spent her evening.

'I am sorry if it was wrong,' she answered simply; 'but the poor man seemed to enjoy talking to me, and I thought it would be cruel to go away. Do you know, he is your friend, the Mr. Stapylton you told me of, Emperor of China.'

'Is he? I asked one of the attendants, and he told me he was not there. How stupid! I should like to have spoken to him, poor fellow. I did not recognise him; but I see it is the same face, but older and altered in expression. He used to be very clever and popular.'

'He is *delightful*,' Violet said. Then, ashamed of such strong praise, added, 'Of course I only say so because he is mad. Do you know, he thought I was mad also!'

'A sure sign he was,' Frank muttered to himself. 'But how did you really get on?'

'O, beautifully. He was quite rational, and the pity he evidently felt for me was most touching.'

Full of admiration for his evident abilities, charmed with his